

AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

JANUARY 27, 1940

WHO'S WHO

THIS WEEK

WILLIAM G. RYAN will be remembered as the gentleman from Milwaukee who wrote some blistering articles last July and August. He was with the Communist Brigaders in Spain. He saw enough of them in Spain to revolt against Communism, and was honest enough to reveal what he saw. . . . BOXHOLDER continues his scouting of the political teams that are getting into action for the big Presidential game next autumn. . . . HILAIRE BELLOC is not unknown to anybody who reads this Review. . . . CORNELIUS A. ELLER, S.J., is hereby introduced with his "first venture in the field of magazine writing." Having completed special studies in economics, he is now Assistant Director of the Crown Heights School of Catholic Workmen of Brooklyn, N. Y. . . . BROOKE HILARY STEWART relates that he left college to write a novel, later persuaded Scripps-Howard to employ him as a copy-runner and reporter, went to California and found the Catholic Church, and is now engaged in freelance writing. . . . OSCAR J. WEBERG writes on the stationery of "Weberg's, paris, illinois," illustrated with six attractive pictures of the store. He states: "Besides operating my own retail store, I am on the staff of one of the national trade journals and write the kind of stuff that helps business men make more money."

NEXT WEEK: read AMERICA. There will be a long article by Etienne Gilson, giving a French view on the war. A short article by Arnold Lunn, offering an English viewpoint. And a third important article by Friedrich Baerwald, explaining the position of a German Catholic. Always important, AMERICA will be triply important next week.

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COMMENT

THE REVELATIONS made by J. Edgar Hoover on January 15 are the stuff from which tragic comedies are concocted. All that he revealed is comic; the tragedy may be in what was not mentioned. He announced "the arrest of eighteen members of the Christian Front, an anti-Semitic organization, on charges of plotting the overthrow of the Government of the United States." Their program, he stated, was to terrorize the Jews, bomb Jewish and Communist buildings, then go on to blast bridges, get control of telephone networks, capture the Custom House, the General Postoffice, and Federal Reserve Bank, seize the Government and set up a Hitlerized dictatorship. The eighteen plotters, Mr. Hoover discovered, had in their possession twelve rifles and eighteen beer-cans of explosives. The whole affair is ridiculously funny, in itself. The eighteen prisoners, we venture to suggest, may be classified somewhat as follows: a few are psychopathic cases who need straight-jackets; a few are nerve-ridden enthusiasts made violent by dark broodings; the others are dupes. It is just as well to remove them from society for a spell of time, till their brains get unrattled. It is well, also, to smash the violent and fanatical groups of organizations calling themselves the Christian Front. The plotters and their plot are as fantastic as the funnies. It is the "revelations" that strike the note of serious significance. The hitherto keen and astute head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation blazes out in what seems to us to be a furious brainstorm. The newspapers enliven a dull Monday morning with startling headlines. All of which, again, makes the whole affair funnier, except for poor Mr. Hoover. There is, undoubtedly, something lurking beneath what is obvious. Mr. Hoover might, we suspect, make more startling revelations if he took the public into his confidence and told who were the agents who prodded him and his agents to turn into comedians. We are inclined to believe that the FBI was used, in this fantastic incident, to further the drive of certain powerful interests.

GLITTERING as the rich oil may have appeared to the Mexican workers as it issued from the pumps, they have discovered it does not follow that it necessarily spells gold in their pockets. With the expropriation of the foreign-owned fields, the Mexican Government, and the workers probably at the Government's prompting, imagined it was a simple thing to carry on in the same fashion as the companies, with the sole difference that the profits would accrue to the Mexicans themselves. It may be recalled that the occasion of the seizure was the refusal of the companies to accede to increased-pay demands on the score that the revenues did not warrant the increase. Recent reports from Mexico

would seem to indicate that the companies' claim was justified. When the Government assumed the operation of the fields, demands of the workers were met temporarily. Furthermore, the man power in the industry was increased by some thirty per cent, while the gross cost of production has risen an even greater percentage. With a decline in the market and lack of adequate storage facilities, the work in the oil fields has been cut down to such an extent that the workers are today receiving less than under the companies' management. Attribute this state of affairs to the loss of the German market, which at best was a purely barter agreement, the fact remains that workers are in a bad way due to Government inefficiency and meddling.

DEEPLY concerned, according to reports, is the Holy Father regarding the effects of the war upon religion; and it is said that he is making special inquiries to that end. To keep religious values intact requires no small courage. Father Paul Doncoeur, S.J., who issued after the World War an historic defiance of the unjust laws which would send the French Religious Orders again into exile, appeals now to his people to keep the Church's works of zeal and charity intact. The civilian who does so, he says, may be as great a "hero" as the soldier at the front, even though civilian trousers are less impressive than an army uniform. The same note is sounded by an Englishman, Father Wilfrid, Abbot of Prinknash. The monks of Prinknash are the former monks of Caldey, who were converted from Anglicanism. Contrary to reports, says Abbot Wilfrid, the war will not stop their work in rebuilding their abbey church. "I do not question," says the Abbot, "the necessity for the arming of our country, but I do feel that a sense of proportion is equally necessary; and it is up to Religious such as ourselves to lay as much stress as possible on the importance of spiritual values." Therefore, he concludes, he will go ahead with the erection of the new Abbey, "a building which is dedicated entirely to the cause of peace."

HERE in American cities knitting classes are being formed to provide comforts for the soldiers at the front. Packages are being made up. As the war continues, we shall see familiar activities of the World War revived. Moving appeals are made. "How can you recline cozily in your air-conditioned apartment," it is asked, "and forget the boys shivering in the trenches?" The note will be sounded tactfully, of course, for business would be injured if people gave up their trips to Florida for the sake of fighters abroad. But the chance to form a few social contacts will help the enthusiasm. In the mean-

while, our Catholic missionaries read these advertisements and wonder what all the fuss is about. Nobody has suddenly had a brainstorm about the priests and nuns in American Indian missions who are battling to keep the children in school while sub-zero gales sweep the Dakota plains, or about the missionaries toiling for Negro sharecroppers or Negro slum dwellers in the South, or about the exiled front-fighters from the United States who minister to starving millions in China or India. Nobody wants the brave lads in the trenches to suffer; but they have rich and powerful governments interested in them and they are in the army only for the duration of the war. But the missionaries are in it for life, and they depend not on governments, but on just plain you and me.

WHEN the attempt was made some years ago to bring the Dionne Quints as freaks to the Chicago Fair, the Canadian Government used its good sense—an habitual quality of most Canadian people—by flatly refusing to allow these children to be exploited. But there is no stopping the promoters of the bizarre. Now that Annette, Cecile, Emilie, Marie and Yvonne are approaching their sixth year, overtures have been made by the New York World's Fair to bring them to Flushing Meadows. And the inducement? \$100,000 to the Canadian Red Cross. There is no doubt that, with her sons at the Front in France, Canada could use this little plum. But we still believe that the authorities will adhere to their traditional mode of straightforward thinking and not permit this outrage against these little girls. The Fair Corporation has proposed to erect a new building for them on the site of the Russian Pavilion, and unquestionably the lessons learned from the Dionnes would be salutary to the American public, after the harm that was disseminated from that spot while "Big Joe" Worker dominated the scene. But why make another giant-panda spectacle out of these children in order to satisfy the idle curiosity of amusement seekers? Their normal life and development should not be interfered with. We still have faith in the Canadian Government's good sense.

PRAISING the League of Nations in expelling Russia from membership, *L'Osservatore Romano* recalls incidentally how complete has been the volte face since the admission of the Soviet Union. Then, only two of the smallest countries in Europe through their representatives decried the admission of a country that by its principles worked against every principle, ideal and the whole framework of the League. Premier Motta speaking for Switzerland said: "This Communism is in every field—religious, moral, social, political, economic—the most absolute negation of all the ideals that are the substance by which we live. Communism fights religion and spirituality in all their forms. Liberty of conscience, to Communism, is nothing but a semblance." The warning words of Premier de Valera went further to the roots:

Hundreds of millions of Christians believe that if a man is deprived of his religion all sense of existence is taken from him. This is what Communism has done. Christians believe the sole means of realizing peace is through the primary Commandment, according to which men love one another for the love of God. This Communism has denied. If the Christian people lose their faith in the League of Nations, the League shall have to declare that it is a failure.

It is worth noting that these two small countries are the most forthright exponents of democracy in Europe, today, despite the impression given by the press and influential propaganda.

HAS any efficiency expert ever measured the waste of time, the wear and tear on the nerves, the exasperation, the irritation to which we dumbly submit in reading our daily papers? You begin on page one, then you go to page four, then you return to page one and then you struggle to page six, and then you retrace the jungle to page one, and then you fight your way to page eight; and after the fifth or sixth operation, you get to a continued article on page nine, and you have to turn back immediately to page one to find out just what is being continued. And, when you have finished the whole paper, you feel you ought to reread it when you are in a more receptive mental state. No wonder mental cases are on the increase. Of course it is important that everything important find mention on the first page for the sake of people who read only the first page before turning to Movies or to Sports. Perhaps there is something to be said for the European style that gives the first page over entirely to advertisements. But then our papers would not look so nice!

MANY years ago, when Finland was still annexed to Russia, the people of Finland lost no opportunity to protest against the encroachments of the Czar of Russia on their freedom. "One of the most important rights," they wrote, "that belongs to every Finnish citizen is to live and labor under the protection of Finnish laws. Today, thousands and thousands of Finnish citizens are deprived of this right." Some of the Russians themselves took up the Finnish cause. One Russian author published in *Iskra*, with fiery approval, the full text of the Finnish protest, and commented:

It is useless, of course, for 2,500,000 Finns to think of an uprising, but we, all Russian citizens, should ponder over the shame that falls upon us. We are still such slaves as to be employed to reduce other tribes to slavery. We still tolerate a government which, with the ferocity of an executioner, suppresses every aspiration towards liberty in Russia, and moreover employs Russian troops for the purpose of violently infringing on the liberties of others.

He may not have been a great man who wrote these words; he may or may not have been sincere; but he must have been something of a prophet. His indictment of the Tsar, penned in 1901, should be a trifle embarrassing to his successor in Russia today. The writer's name was Lenin.

PENITENT FELLOW TRAVELERS MUST BE CAUTIOUSLY APPRAISED

Their tears over Finland resemble the crocodile's

WILLIAM G. RYAN

DISGUSTING as their antics have been since the recent hurried retreat from the respectable front, Comrade Browder's shock troops must yield first place in intellectual depravity to their despised auxiliaries. In sheer slimy hypocrisy and callous cynicism, the pupils of Communism have excelled the masters. Indeed, the performance of the avowed Moscovites throughout the latest crisis seems honesty and frankness personified in comparison to the tortuous mental writhings of their deserting fellow travelers. A certain amazed admiration may be accorded to the robot comrades who hewed to the line even when the chips were raining disaster on their heads. But those who ran to cover squealing loudly for mercy at the first sign of danger induce nothing but nausea in tolerant observers.

It cannot be doubted that, during the past five years, many sincere and honest intellectuals came to regard Soviet Russia as a star in the East pointing the way to a more just and equitable social order. They were the victims of a clever, powerful and persistent propaganda, and it is a positive duty to understand and sympathize with their present very real distress. Those who would judge them harshly should not lose sight of the fact that many honest supporters of Communism have only recently been made aware of the true nature of the Bolshevik regime. To extend the hand of fellowship to ex-fellow travelers and ex-Communists who have had the moral integrity frankly and indignantly to repudiate the brutal barbarities of the Moscow butchers is a simple act of tolerance.

There is, however, a class of calculating repudiators who must be regarded in a totally different light. These people, long before Stalin's open aggressions, had had unusual opportunities to observe at first hand and at close range certain pertinent characteristics of Communist rule. It is with this type of penitent that we are chiefly concerned and we think it would be well to weigh their past and future actions carefully before admitting them to the society of decent men. In the measure of renunciations, there is both wheat and tares. If we are to avoid reaping a harvest of noisome propaganda weeds, we must sift cautiously.

It is largely for the purpose of examining in an objectively critical manner some of the recent Left-

wing denunciations of Stalin that this article is written. The two cases considered are chosen, not alone because of their prominence and the furor which they have created, but because the writer has some first-hand knowledge of the past careers of Mr. Ralph Bates and Mr. Vincent Sheean.

These two literary gentlemen played parts in the late bloody Spanish drama, as did the writer in a much humbler rôle. Mr. Bates and Mr. Sheean have but recently set the Left-wing literary and political worlds agog with what is to me, at least, the most amazing and incredible condemnation of Stalin's Finnish adventure that I ever expect to see. I am struck almost dumb with astonishment to find that these twain are full of long-range indignation and sympathy for the Finns because I had every reason to believe that they were made of much sterner stuff. I did not think there was an ounce of bourgeois sentimentality in either Ralph Bates or Vincent Sheean.

In Spain, their mental armor was not dented by bloody butchery, O.G.P.U. terror, executions without trial, concentration camps, or any of the other revolting details of Stalinist rule on the Loyalist side. On their return from Loyalist Spain to lands where they could speak freely without "disappearing" forthwith, they were so quiet about these examples of atrocities in Spain that one could hear a Finn drop in their presence. They both survived the "Communazi" pact in sturdy fashion, and now at the precise setting time of the Soviet star to which they clung so tenaciously during its ascendancy they grow mightily indignant at the Red rape of Finland.

In Spain I knew Ralph Bates as well as a private soldier could know the most powerful officer in his brigade. He was the Political Commissar of the Fifteenth Brigade of the Army euphemistically called the People's. This was a position of great power since Commissars could, and often did when the fancy seized them, have anyone, including the commanding military officer, shot out of hand.

Spain during the Civil War was an excellent place to make a study of Commissars, if one cared for that kind of anthropological research. In low moments I often amused myself by studying Commissars, at a respectful distance, of course. I came to

believe that they had recognizable physical stigmata as distinct and well defined as the shiny puttees, the three-quarter-length fur-lined leather jacket, the high leather boots, the Soviet star in the jauntily angled military cap, and the ostentatiously displayed long-barreled revolver. Commissars and lice were always the fattest and best fed creatures in Stalinist Spain.

Comrade Bates was my favorite Commissar because he was so typical. In all except bloodthirstiness he seemed to me a composite of all the Commissars I had known. He was properly roly-poly, he had the right Stalin droop to his moustache, he wore his Soviet star and revolver at just the correct angles, and he had to a remarkable degree the Communist gift for stringing endless slogans together in tremendously boring, interminably protracted speeches.

I refer to Mr. Bates as comrade since he was so titled in Spain. Until I read the *New Republic* condemnation of Stalin, *Disaster in Finland*, in which he is distressingly vague about his exact political status, I had supposed that he was an accredited member of Djughashvili's Party. My reasons for so assuming were numerous and varied. Not only did Comrade Bates attend closed Party meetings in Spain, but in the plethora of Commissars I have known only two who were indubitably non-Communist.

Whatever his political alignments, Mr. Bates was on the scene in an extraordinarily favorable position to observe the inner and outer workings of, perhaps, the most savage and bloodthirsty regime that ever oppressed a liberty-loving people. Yet, on his return to happier shores, he made no mention of disaster in Spain. Instead, he toured the length and breadth of the land thrilling elderly and middle-aged American ladies with a remarkable lecture about "the romantic and realistic periods" of the Spanish Civil War—a lecture which I was once able to quote almost verbatim as a result of having drunk it from the fountain-head so often in Spain.

Between lectures Mr. Bates found time to ply his regular trade of proletarian author. He did not mention mass executions without trial of those who did not believe in the absolute infallibility of the Beloved Leader in the Kremlin; he whispered no word of Stalin's concentration camps in Spain; but he did speak feelingly of the tender regard which the Communist armies displayed for old masters and *objets d'art*—an artistic enthusiasm which, he neglected to mention, often manifested itself by shooting church statuary full of holes.

In referring to the bombing of Helsinki and the failure of the Communist press adequately to report that incident in the "liberation of Finland," Mr. Bates says: "The bad faith, and the shame, of the Communists is evident." But he hastens to add in another part of the article: "Lest I be thought to be unfairly critical of the Spanish Communist Party, let me say that the Party throughout the Civil War exercised marvelous patience, showed great wisdom, demonstrated its magnificent courage and worked with an exhausting intensity in the service of the Spanish cause." An exhausting in-

tensity, indeed, as the ghosts of the murdered would attest if they could speak! Would it be capacious to conclude that the good faith of this ex-Commissar author is not yet evident?

Vincent Sheean is not and was not a political Commissar, but his book *Not Peace But a Sword* indicates that he may have the soul of a Commissar. This gentleman runs to personal histories, and his history in Spain was one of close association with almost every rotten little Communist stooge in the country. Mr. Sheean says: "The government in Spain got less 'Red' all the time." All in all, he does a good literary job of smearing a coating of nobleness over as filthy a set of cut-throats as ever disgraced the dignity of man. Good men and honest men lived and died in Spain, but apparently Mr. Sheean met none of them. What trust can now be placed in this repudiating fellow traveler who has demonstrated to the complete satisfaction of almost everyone that he is either unbelievably naive or repugnantly dishonest?

Although I think long probation periods are in order for Mr. Sheean, Mr. Bates and others of their ilk, I would be the last to reject the repudiations of those who cast off Bolshevism as soon as they saw its gruesome face without a mask. As a Communist party member of ten years' standing who believed implicitly in the Soviet Union as a major hope for suffering mankind, and as a staunch adherent of the Communist ideology whose sympathy eventually took the concrete form of offering the supreme sacrifice for the cause, I think I understand something of the process by which I and others like me became the blind followers of false prophets.

We had no doubts, or if feeble ones did arise, they were quickly crushed beneath what looked like a towering mass of unimpeachable evidence. It seemed as though all the tall forests of the Worker's Fatherland had been ground into paper pulp and sprayed with billions of glowing words to describe the glories of our Utopia. The reputable professors drenched our minds with a warm rain of figures to fructify our belief in the success of the Five-Year Plan. The thrilled literati, returning from pilgrimages to the shrine of Lenin, waxed lyrical over the establishment of the classless society. Our hearts became too large for our bodies when we saw in Soviet-made motion pictures the crèches, the tractors, the happy smiling peasants on the collectives, and the Red Army of defense and peace marching on May 1. If an occasional discordant note did mar the symphony to Stalin we knew that it was the work of a Fascist disrupter and merely shouted our hallelujah chorus the louder.

If we have facilitated the forward march of despotism, if we have unwittingly struck down freedom and truth, if we have even resorted to murder and the shedding of innocent blood as we did in Spain, we can only say: "Forgive us! We knew not what we did." But that is what we must say, must act and must believe if we wish to walk erect again. Those who couch their penitence in weasel words or foreswear their past for expediency's sake have not regained the stature of manhood. Rather, they have sunk into deeper depths of duplicity.

PRIMER FOR VOTERS:

II: APPORTIONMENT

BOXHOLDER

CONNECTICUT invented canned milk and the sewing machine. It gave us the Colt revolver. It gave us Noah Webster and his dictionary, the five preaching Beechers, Harriet and her Eliza crossing the ice.

Add to these virtues another: Connecticut can be patly used to illustrate the Republican party's rules for apportionment. So let us go back four years to the December before the Convention which nominated Landon, and see how the National Committee calculated the State quotas to the convention of June, 1936.

Republican Apportionment Rule One grants "4 delegates from each State." Once upon a time, in the Pickering "plot," Connecticut almost seceded from the Union, and today jealous neighbors to the west sometimes taunt the little State with reminders of her sin. But let the reader forget it. Connecticut, one of the Original Thirteen, is still every inch a State, and the apportionment experts of the Republican Committee began with that fact. They gave her

By Rule One . . . 4 dels. (At Large)

The bouldered lands that lie between the Berkshires and the Thames are mapped off into five Congressional districts. First District, for instance, is a square enclosing the counties around Hartford. Third is a triangle based on New Haven. Fourth is shaped like a greyhound's muzzle, head and neck, the latter containing the little Sound towns famous in our early history. Rule Two grants "one delegate from each Congressional District"; and so the party statisticians wrote:

For 5 Dists. . . . 5 dels.

But the Nutmeggers were represented in the House at Washington by six, not only by five, Congressmen, for a growing population entitled the State to a Representative at-Large. True, the apportioners did not look kindly upon him, for he happened in that year to be a Democrat; nevertheless, they were glad to take advantage of Rule Three, which allows a State "two delegates for each Representative-at-Large." Hence to Connecticut's tabulation they added:

For 1 Rep.-A. L. . . . 2 dels. (A. L.)

Pins and needles, hooks and eyes are products of Connecticut. She also manufactures hardware, machinery, clocks, typewriters, brass goods, cutlery. Cold and metallic in her wares, the State is cold and metallic in her Presidential balloting and always votes for the Republican. Indeed, in the ten elections between Bryan's first run and this Roosevelt's second, the Charter Oak State has slipped but once, and that was only because the faithful, equally divided in their love for Taft and Teddy,

fought one another, split their majority and left the spoils to Wilson.

But eight years ago, when F. D. R. made his first thundering charge, the Yankees stood by their fathers' flag. They fought off the New Deal, they bled for Hoover and kept the State safe for the old party. Republican Rule Four grants "three additional delegates from each State casting its electoral vote for the Republican nominee in the last Presidential election." And so the apportioners allowed a bonus:

For Electoral Vote, 1932 . . . 3 dels. (A. L.)

Yet when the statisticians turned the pages of the record book to see what happened two years later, they discovered a disturbing fact. The State which bled for the Great Engineer had soon begun to flirt with his enemy, and when Connecticut voters went to the polls in 1934 to choose Representatives to Congress, they elected three Democrats, two Republicans.

This was disturbing. But the apportioners were now more interested in their party's strength than in its defeats. The thing they wanted to find out now was this: what was the Republican vote in each district? Never mind who won the district; how big was its party vote? Did the district cast at least 10,000 ballots for its Republican nominee?

Well, they found that all five districts had topped that minimum, in fact, had greatly exceeded it. Rule Five grants "one additional delegate from each Congressional district casting 10,000 votes or more for the Republican nominee in the last Congressional election (or in the last Presidential election)." Hence, the hat-makers got another bonus:

By Rule Five . . . 5 dels.

Adding all these figures, the political mathematicians found that Connecticut had the right to 19 delegates in the National Convention of 1936. And of course, they calculated the quotas of the other forty-seven States on the same basis—the rules, namely, as applied to the election returns.

But that was in December, 1935. Since that time the country has witnessed two events of major political importance—one, the tremendous, forty-six-State sweep by Roosevelt in his second election, and the other, a sharp recoil from the New Deal in the Congressional elections of 1938. Both events will affect apportionment to next summer's convention, and the Republican National Committee is ready to publish its calculations. By reference to the rules above, the reader can forecast the convention strength of a number of States.

Vermont (give her 4 delegates to begin with) has one Representative-at-Large (hence, add 2), but no Congressional Districts. On Judgment Day of 1936, she stood firm for Landon (add a bonus of 3). Total of Vermont delegation to the 1940 Convention: 9.

Pennsylvania (start with 4) has 34 districts (add 34). They all surpassed the 10,000-vote minimum in the House elections (add 34). But previously, in the Great Flood, the State climbed aboard the Roosevelt ark, and hence gets no bonus under Rule four. Total: 72.

New York (4) has two Congressmen-at-Large (add 4) and 43 districts (add 43). All but two of them passed 10,000 in the recent elections (add 41). Total: 92.

At Cleveland, four years ago, a hot little fight was precipitated on the convention floor by an attempt to raise the quota of the District of Columbia, Hawaii and Alaska from 3 to 6 delegates each. These dependencies do not vote in the Presidential election, and the convention is the closest approach they make to national politics. The faithful in Washington have long felt that they should have the right to cast an electoral vote for President as well as a stronger voice in nominating him; moreover one of the Hawaiian delegates pointed out that his territory contained more Republicans than several of our States, and should have as much to say about nominee and platform.

The Convention however refused to raise the strength of these delegations, although it agreed to permit the Philippines to be represented in future by 2 delegates. It left Puerto Rico with 2.

In total, the fifty-three units of the Republican party will send 1,000 delegates to this year's convention.

One alternate, who votes only in the absence of his principal, is named for each delegate, and this puts another thousand persons on the floor of the convention.

The wording of the rules as quoted above has been compressed, and their numbers are not official.

Among the Democrats, the method of apportionment is much simpler, and the reader needs no record of election returns to compute State quotas to the convention. By party rules each State sends twice the number of its Congressmen. To say it another way, twice its electoral vote.

For example, California, with 2 Senators and 20 House Members, will send 44 to the convention. Missouri, which casts an electoral vote of 15, will send 30. New Mexico, whose Congressmen are Hatch, Chavez and Dempsey, will send 6.

To the delegates of the forty-eight States, add 6 for the District of Columbia, then 6 each for Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Alaska, and Canal Zone, then 2 for Virgin Islands.

There will be a total of 1,100 votes in the Democratic Convention.

It should be noted, though, that the members of any Democratic delegation may outnumber its votes. This is because rules permit the sharing of a vote by two, and frequently by more, delegates. Thus Maine names 14 persons to cast her 10 votes, and Maryland sends 48 delegates to cast her 16.

The Democrats name one alternate for each delegate, and hence, at a guess, there will be well over 3,000 persons officially seated on the Convention floor—a figure comprising the dignified one-vote men, the numerous half or quarter-vote sharers, and the vast army of alternates.

The method of apportionment now in vogue among the Democrats was formerly used by the Republicans. It has serious faults—so serious, in

fact, that the G. O. P. abandoned the system in 1912, and some Democrats are now clamoring for revision.

The chief fault of the method may be first illustrated and then explained. About thirty years ago, Georgia and Iowa had nearly equal populations. The Republican apportioners, operating under the old rule, allowed the two States an almost equal delegate strength in convention. But now see how differently the voters had supported the Republican candidate in the previous election:

Ga. 41,700 (for Taft, 1908) . . 28 dels. (1912)

Ia. 275,200 (for Taft, 1908) . . 26 dels. (1912)

In other words, while one State had over six times as many Republican voters as the other, it had a weaker voice in nominating the candidate, writing the platform and in other essential party matters.

The same injustice may be noted in other figures for the Convention (1912). Four Southern States (Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina) could combine in convention to outvote a Northern State; but see their enormous disparity in popular strength, as shown in the 1908 election:

4 States: 82 dels. . . . 42,600 for Taft

Penn.: 76 dels. . . . 745,800 for Taft

Both examples are extreme, but they emphasize the fundamental difficulty. The method apportions delegates on the basis of population, instead of on party strength. It looks to the census rather than to the election returns. It asks: "How many people live in this State?" instead of asking: "What is the number of our voters?" After all, a National Convention is a strictly party meeting, gathered to conduct party business; therefore the size of each delegation ought to be based on the total of party stalwarts in the State, not on the total of State inhabitants—a figure that obviously includes children, aliens, non-voters, and worst of all, adherents of the opposition parties.

Look again at the Iowa-Georgia figures above. Just because two States have the same number of Congressmen, why should one, wherein the party is feeble and even defunct, have an equal voice with the other, wherein the faithful are overwhelmingly in majority?

That, at least, was the argument that led the Republicans to adopt their new system—although it also has defects.

And now the Democrats, at least those in the South, are demanding a similar change of rule. The Southerners recently lost their traditional veto power over the Democratic nomination (the two-thirds rule will be dealt with in a later paper). They now insist that their strength and long loyalty to the party must be recognized and rewarded, possibly by an increase in Convention quotas.

As a result of their agitation, the National Committee next week will try to devise a plan for a "more equitable distribution of delegates." The plan will not, of course, affect next summer's convention; it must be approved by that gathering if it is to apportion the delegates of 1944.

Politicians are patient, and they see far ahead.

THE POPE SPOKE AND THE TRIPLE TRUTH WAS TOLD

HILAIRE BELLOC

THE modern world, after a few brief generations of irreligion, has come to a climax. The whole of what was once a Christian society is in peril of breakdown.

This imminent crisis takes two forms. The direction of human effort has been lost to the free man who should make the effort and has been captured by the monopolizers of credit: that is, the modern banking system. The free man's control of his own labor, implements and, therefore, livelihood as a craftsman, has been lost and has passed to a comparatively small class of owners whom the non-owners have to serve in order to live.

These inhuman conditions, which only the remaining free peasantries escape, are intolerable and have, therefore, bred a demand for their immediate removal by Communism. Take away the property of the few and their control over the instruments of production and livelihood, put in their place the officials and police force of the State—then there will be no unjust profit-making out of other men's labor, no want among many and luxury among few—and so forth.

But this proposed remedy for our discontents is an evil even worse than the other two. It involves the full enslavement of all, complete tyranny, the end of human dignity, of the family—of the free individual soul.

These three truths are so obvious that one would think all men might take them for granted. The destruction of human freedom by the control of international banking and by the loss of men's property in the conditions of their livelihood are intolerable; but the remedy proposed, the remedy of general enslavement, is more inhuman and more intolerable still.

Now a strange thing has happened. One voice and one only has specifically pointed out this triple peril to mankind. One voice and one only has summed up the whole situation. That voice is the voice of a Pope.

There are millions of voices proclaiming more and more loudly their detestation of financial oppression in particular and capitalistic oppression in general. There are millions of voices—a lesser number, but still millions—proclaiming the inhuman remedy of Communism; but one voice and one voice only has proclaimed to the world that the economic evils are what they are and at the same time that the Communist solution is abominable.

A Pope has said that: (1) the direction of human energies by the monopolizers of credit is part of an evil disease; (2) the proletariat of today has been reduced to a condition "not far removed from slavery." But he has added, with regard to Communism, that (3) the remedy is worse than the disease.

Now, is it not remarkable that when a universal trouble has fallen upon the world, only one voice should have clearly defined the nature of that trouble in its three distinct parts: the financial part, the industrial, capitalist part and the Communist part?

There is nothing remarkable in the denunciation of suffering, degradation and injustice. Men have done that from the beginning of time. It is a matter of course. It was to be expected that the oppressions of finance and industrial capitalism should be increasingly denounced by all their victims. It was to be expected that the Communist remedy should be denounced by those who feared personal loss of wealth with the advance of Communism. One might expect the victim of the credit monopoly to attack it and the victim of industrial capitalism to attack it; and one might expect the wealthy interests which would be the victims of Communism to attack *that*; but what was not to be expected was that one impartial and supreme judgment should appear denouncing all three—nor was such a judgment heard save in one quarter.

The Pope spoke and the triple truth was told.

Because it was an all-important truth, because the understanding of it would be a saving of our society, it went by hardly heeded by the non-Catholic and anti-Catholic world. *Parts* of it would be eagerly quoted in defense of revolution, and *parts* of it as eagerly quoted in defense of wealthy interests against Communism. But the value of the *whole*: the fact that only as a whole had it any value at all; the fact that this value was of the very highest sort; these were the facts that were not grasped.

But the thing has been done and it will remain.

The great Encyclicals have postulated the three bases upon which alone and in combination can the reform of the modern industrial world stand firmly and be permanent.

First, we must not endure the control of human life by finance.

Indeed, the thing of its nature cannot endure. It leads directly to catastrophe; for it is opposed

to the prime necessities of men living in a free society.

Second, we must not endure the partial and increasing enslavement of an industrial proletariat in the hands of another class; and, indeed, the thing is already breaking down as it was bound to break down, because it is not tolerable to free men living in a free society.

But still less can we endure the centralized control of the State over all our lives.

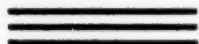
The effort toward it is politically an evil, no matter what benefits it secures, and the Pope has denounced it on the political side as much as on the economic. But totalitarian economic State control, as Communism or Nazism, is worse still, for it involves political control as well as mere material control. It means the ownership by an inhuman State, not only of men's bodies and houses and instruments, but the control of their souls—the destruction of all those spiritual things whereby men live and, among those things, the family.

Therefore, the remedy of the financial evil and of the industrial evil must be sought through the establishment of free families working as peasantries and as guilds. That is the goal to which all this Papal teaching points, and any other direction is a steering toward shipwreck.

Men will inevitably return more and more to hearing that one voice; and is it not astonishing that one voice alone should have proclaimed the truth? For truth lies in proportion.

SOCIAL SECURITY SOWS THE SEEDS OF MONOPOLY

CORNELIUS A. ELLER



ON January 1, our biggest and most costly piece of social machinery went into high gear. On that day the benefits program of the Federal compulsory old-age insurance system became operative. What is the meaning of this statistical colossus? What are the implications contained in its forty-five million individual accounts and its fabulous payment-bill expected to reach about two billion dollars a year by 1955?

It means that proletarianization of the American people has reached the point where economic insecurity becomes a menace to the common good. The failure of the old liberalistic formulae to distribute wealth conformably to the general welfare of the nation is as obvious as it is dismal. This dismal failure, with respect to the aged, is disclosed in many studies of the extent of old-age dependency made by commissions of various States.

To cite an instance or two. An official Connecticut survey of 1932 shows that, of the residents of

that State over sixty-five years of age, thirty-three and one half per cent had no income at all. A Wisconsin report of 1915 points out that twenty-one per cent of the residents over sixty years of age had incomes below \$100 a year, and only twenty-nine per cent had incomes above \$500. According to a New York State survey of 1930, seventy-four and one-half per cent of the individuals in New York City sixty-five years of age and over possessed property valued at less than \$5,000 and received an annual income of less than \$300. These studies are eloquent testimony to the fact that total dependence on the weekly wage is a bitter reality for the great mass of Americans; that is, we have a genuine proletariat.

These studies, moreover, call attention to the inadequacy of wages to provide against the contingencies of advanced age. Thus, the launching of old-age insurance signifies that the problem of old-age dependency in this country, arising from the inability of the established wage-system to provide reserve-funds for old age and from the widespread lack of income-yielding property on the part of our people, has reached such proportions that, for the sake of the common good, the Government is forced to step in and erect an insurance system based upon *social* rather than upon *private* insurance principles.

Not everyone will accept all the specific provisions of the American insurance plan. But the necessity of assuring those now employed of a steady income when they can no longer offer their services in the labor market is clear from the performance of the economic system considered as a whole. We are reaping the fruits of the old economic "free-for-all": our people are propertyless, with nothing but their daily labor to exchange for their daily sustenance.

To determine the significance of so vast a social program as far as the economic structure of the country is concerned requires painstaking and extensive analysis. What are the dynamics of such a program? What economic and social repercussions will it have? These are important questions which are often ignored or answered only cursorily. Yet upon the answers to these questions our judgment of the advisability or inadvisability of such a program should, in large measure, be based. Failure to answer these questions properly often makes a bad situation worse.

Let us try to trace a few of the shocks which this social security program will produce and see how it will modify or tend to modify our present economic structure.

Monopolization is fostered by concentration. The fewer the production units in any field the more likely is it that a monopoly will arise in that field—a restricted monopoly, of course. The reasons are quite obvious. It is much easier for a few large firms to combine on the basis of a common policy and understanding than for a thousand small firms to do so. Therefore whatever causes a tendency toward concentration in industry, by that very fact, causes a tendency toward monopolization. Consequently, if it can be shown that our social security

system tends to bring about a decrease in the number of producers in a given field, then that system fosters monopoly. If the demand in question is elastic and labor is well organized, it is clear that when a new cost item is added generally throughout an industry the marginal producers will be squeezed out. The smaller and weaker producers will be forced out of business.

Now social security does precisely that. It increases the cost of production by levying a tax upon employment. In some cases labor will bear the cost through shifting. But in others the small producer will suffer. Moreover, if the labor cost per unit of output is greater in some plants than in others within the same industry, it follows that a tax levied upon pay rolls, which is not shifted, increases the unit output cost of the former plants more than that of the latter, and therefore gives the latter a competitive advantage over the former. Now it is in the small craft shops that the labor cost per unit of output is generally higher than in the large mechanized plants. Consequently, a social security program financed even in part by pay-roll taxes tends, as can be obviously seen, to drive the small producers from the field and to leave it to the large ones.

Again, since it is the aim of every producer to keep his costs as low as possible, under competitive conditions, it is clear that, if the cost of employing labor is increased by placing a tax upon it, producers will seek for a substitute with which to replace human labor. That substitute is machinery, and when it becomes more profitable to use a new machine instead of men, the men will be dismissed. But the small producer can rarely follow the same procedure, for he either has not sufficient capital at his disposal to do so or his market is too small to permit it. Thus, the big man curtails his costs while the little man has to bear them. The result: the little man gradually leaves the field and starts another enterprise or becomes a wage-earner. More probably the latter.

For these reasons among many others which cannot be discussed here, it seems that our old-age insurance plan possesses at least a tendency to favor monopoly, and this tendency will grow, because social insurance will grow. The burden of the insurance on the economic system may not as yet be sufficiently heavy to make this tendency felt, but give it time. Even now there is some talk about financing a system of compulsory health insurance by means of pay-roll taxes.

The irony of this whole affair is that, while the Government is carrying on a strenuous campaign against monopoly, it is at the same time taking measures which contain the seeds of monopoly; while the Government is trying to increase income, the very program it uses for that purpose may quite possibly create additional unemployment. If it does not reduce wages; while the Government is striving to offset the evil effects of wage-dependency, the measures it is taking to achieve that end do themselves favor such dependency; for, by causing the disappearance of the small shop, they deprive many a present wage-earner of the chance

he looks for of becoming an independent producer some day.

This is not to be considered a condemnation of social insurance as such. Far from it. We fully appreciate the desirability of such insurance under present conditions. But we do condemn the economic eclecticism which tries to combine into one system the discordant elements of opposing economic systems, and hopes to see a given system operate successfully when it destroys the necessary preconditions for its operation.

SPOILERS OF VINES WITHIN THE VINEYARD

BROOKE HILARY STEWART



THERE are joys and hardships, and once in a while shocks and bewilderments, which are peculiar to the convert alone.

The convert has the satisfaction of finding Home after many a weary, wandering year, a satisfaction necessarily different from that enjoyed by those who have lived long lives within its protecting walls. He has also the loneliness of one at odds with friends and family. It is no easy lot to know that those you love, despise and mourn the choice you make. And he is fortunate who escapes some little disillusionment, not by the Faith but by the faithful.

When I became a Catholic, I found that I had my work cut out for me. My Protestant people had always arrayed themselves against Catholicism, and I knew that if I failed to paint a saner picture of the Faith, I could expect to be forever grieved over as one who had been caught in the snares of the devil.

They were pious people, firmly faithful to their own beliefs, and I did not hope to make Catholics of them. But I wanted to have them know the facts about the Church, and I felt sure that once the barrier of prejudice had been leveled, they would see that I was not altogether lost.

It was a hard job, penetrating their old hostility and straightening out the web of misinformation that bound them, but I worked at it doggedly. I do not think I ever let a statement I recognized as false go by without correction.

To say that I succeeded in making them understand why I became a Catholic would be to stretch the truth; for if I had made them see the Church as I saw it, they would have become Catholics too. I do believe, however, that now Catholicism is to them simply another religion, and not, as before, the sink of greed and superstition.

This re-education of my family seemed to me a cruel and heavy task when I took it on, but I was

prepared for it. I was not prepared to learn that the distortions of fact believed by my family were pillars of truth to many a Catholic.

Six months ago I was laid up with an injury, and from my hospital bed I heard expounded, by fellow-Catholics, doctrinal errors as serious as any held by my Protestant people. In the solarium one afternoon, two women were talking, a Catholic and a Protestant. The Protestant was holding a book.

"I've been reading the Bible," she laughed. "I wasn't very well acquainted with it till I got sick, but now I find it so interesting that I read a bit every day."

"Do you?" asked the other hesitantly, "I've never read it at all."

"I'll lend you my copy if you'd care to look it over," the Protestant offered.

"O no!" protested the Catholic, "We're not *allowed* to read it you know."

"Not allowed to read the *Bible*?" the woman exclaimed, amazed.

I broke in mildly from force of habit.

"That's not quite right," I said. "Catholics don't read the King James Version, we have our own, the Douay."

"What's that?" asked the Catholic.

"Well," I explained, surprised, "the Douay Version is the Catholic English translation of the Bible—the King James is used by most Protestants."

"I didn't know there were *two* Bibles."

"O," I laughed, "there is only one Bible, but there are any number of translations." Then I tried to explain to these ladies the differences between the two under discussion and the reasons Catholics are not permitted to read the King James.

"Well, anyhow," the Catholic lady said firmly, "we're not allowed to read the Bible—*any* Bible."

As the weeks of my convalescence went on, I became accustomed to hearing this sort of thing right along. A young Catholic in the room with me was discussing a recent mercy killing.

"But don't you think," he asked me, "that a poor child suffering from an incurable and agonizing disease would better be put to death quietly and humanely, than be made to suffer its miserable life out, bringing nothing but grief to every one in the picture?"

Knowing this lad was a Catholic, I remarked that such a sentiment was not in harmony with Church teaching.

He elaborated on his "humane" theory, and the discussion ended with the boy good-humoredly, but seriously, accusing me of condoning cruelty.

As euthanasia found Catholics to defend it, so too did birth control and divorce. And though one would think that these two practices had been preached against by churchmen from platform, pulpit and printed page often enough to make the Church's dicta absolutely clear, there are yet "practising" Catholics who can say, apparently with clear conscience, that they believe divorce obtainable in the Church (if you know the right people or have enough money), and that certain noted priests have openly favored mechanical birth control.

It avails little to explain the Church's procedure in the case of invalid marriages, and one might as well leave the birth control argument alone for all the good discussion does.

I have heard Church-going Catholics say that continence in married life, even when agreed upon by both parties, is unlawful; and pious ladies with medals round their necks have told me that their young children have every right to choose their own religion and, therefore, need not attend Mass on appointed days unless and until the spirit moves them to do so.

In a political argument between a Catholic and an atheist, I listened while the Catholic claimed for the Pope *full* infallibility. This man actually believed that the Church taught the Pope was always right—that if the Pope said it would rain on Tuesday, that statement was the word of Heaven. The atheist no doubt went away, more firmly than ever rooted in unbelief. And his opponent was the father of a large Catholic family!

The man in the room next to mine had a bit of Mother Cabrini's habit. He pinned it to his bandages and believed with all his heart that the mere proximity of this piece of material to his wound would bring him back to health. To him the object had healing power of itself, quite apart from prayerful effort on his part.

These are only examples of the many things I saw and heard in my four months' hospitalization, and I know that these things do not gain converts for the Church. They do not present the Church of God in a true or appealing light. They make the Faith look like a crazy conglomeration of superstition and paganism. When they hear such things first hand from a Catholic, it is small wonder so many Protestants and unbelievers store in their minds falsehoods and prejudices.

Until I went to the hospital, my only contact with Catholics had been among the more or less educated. The hospital provided my first experience with a less enlightened class, and I am grateful for that experience. A battle cannot be fought if you know only what you are fighting for; you have also to know what and whom you are fighting.

The Catholic war for understanding is being waged against ignorance and misinformation, and if much of that misinformation flows from our own ranks, it is well to know it.

It is odd that a few who have known the Church for so short a time should know Her better—I do not suggest that they love Her better—than many who were born with Her blessing, but this seems to be the unfortunate state of things.

There would have been scant justification for writing such an article as this if the people herein mentioned represented the negligent, or fallen-away class of Catholics. They did not—they honestly believed in all they told me, and considered themselves the better Christians for so believing.

I do not know how they arrived at these weird and faulty conclusions, but I do know that the lies they peddle, however innocently, are more formidable enemies of the Faith than the inventions of malicious detractors outside the Church.

CHRONICLE

THE ADMINISTRATION. Asserting that the generation of electric power was only one of the objectives of the Tennessee Valley Authority, which he described as "a great social and economic experiment in one of our major watersheds," President Roosevelt forwarded to Congress his TVA agency's request for authority to develop a huge playground area in the six Southern States included in the TVA domain. . . . From April 8, 1935, to December 31, 1939, eighty Federal agencies spent \$11,776,501,569 of the \$12,930,201,033 appropriated in relief and emergency funds, President Roosevelt informed Congress. Of the total sum expended, WPA disbursed \$7,412,857,674. . . . In the six years of its existence, the Civilian Conservation Corps provided jobs for 2,600,000, a CCC report declared. . . . Construction of two huge luxury passenger liners which can be converted into airplane carriers was planned by the Maritime Commission. . . . The accumulation of gold in the United States increased from \$4,000,000,000 in 1934 to \$17,600,000,000, or approximately sixty per cent of the world supply, in 1939. . . . Opposition to the reapportionment of the House of Representatives, mandatory under the Constitution every decade, having appeared in that body, President Roosevelt urged the House to pass a Senate-approved resolution requiring reapportionment in 1941 in accordance with the new census. . . . President Roosevelt ordered the Treasury to make available to the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee records of income and other tax returns for the years 1936, 1937 and 1938.

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CONGRESS. Following Norway's refusal to ratify transfer of eight United States Lines vessels to a newly formed Norwegian corporation, owned in part by the American company, Senator Clark of Missouri demanded an inquiry into the transaction. . . . Appearing before the House Ways and Means Committee, Secretary Hull asked for a three-year extension of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act which expires June 12. Assailing the Hawley-Smoot tariff enacted in 1930, Mr. Hull argued that his program would aid international stability after the war, and that the twenty-two trade treaties he had arranged aided American prosperity by opening substantial foreign markets for agricultural and manufactured products from the United States. Opponents of the measure, while not denying that exports to trade-agreement countries had increased, maintained that necessary concessions to these countries had injured certain American industries. Under the Trade Agreements Act, the President can make trade treaties without securing Senate ratification. . . . A resolution to withdraw the American Embassy from Moscow was introduced in the House of Representatives. . . . The

House Appropriations Committee, in an effort to prevent increased taxes or an increased national debt limit, slashed \$94,492,166 from the President's budget recommendations on the Independent Offices Supply Bill. The Committee withheld all moneys asked for the National Resources Planning Board and the Office of Government Reports, declaring these agencies were created by the President and not by authority of law. The President's uncle, Frederic A. Delano, is head of the National Resources Planning Board. . . . The House approved an emergency defense measure calling for \$264,611,000 additional expenditures for the United States armed forces. . . . In a letter to Congress, President Roosevelt asserted there is in the United States "a great desire to assist Finland to finance the purchase of agricultural surpluses and manufactured products, not including implements of war," and suggested that Congress authorize the Export-Import Bank and the R.F.C. to arrange loans. Representative Rayburn, Administration leader in the House, declared Finland could barter the agricultural and manufactured products for "other products." The idea appeared to be that Finland could exchange American goods for implements of war from Britain, France or other nations. Considerable opposition to the President's plan arose in Congress on the ground that it might prove the first step toward involvement in war.

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WASHINGTON. A. M. Fox, Tariff Commission member, referring to the breakdown of the United States-Argentina trade pact negotiations, declared that the State Department had protested to Great Britain and France on the ground they had offered unfair trade concessions to Argentina. . . . At her press conference, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt said she was personally in favor of "planned families," and that during her New York residence she had subscribed to a birth-control clinic. . . . Before the House Committee investigating the National Labor Relations Board, considerable testimony was presented purporting to show irregularities in the Board's operation. Documents were placed in the record to indicate that Board trial examiners, limited to hearing cases, had helped prepare them and that Board employees were biased in favor of the C.I.O. . . . Chairman Smith of the House Committee announced the inquiry would be turned over to Charles Fahy, Labor Board general counsel, that Mr. Fahy could call any witness he chose and present "the Labor Board's side of the case."

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AT HOME. J. Edgar Hoover, chief of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, announced the arrest in New York of eighteen men, described as members

of the Christian Front organization, on a charge of conspiring "to overthrow and destroy the Government of the United States, to oppose by force of arms the authority of the United States Government and to seize and take possession of property of the United States." Mr. Hoover said there were found in some of the men's homes eighteen bombs and twelve rifles together with ammunition. . . . Federal subsidization of higher education would soon mean "bureaucratic regulation," asserted J. W. Lowes, financial vice-president of Harvard University, at the Philadelphia meeting of the Association of American Colleges. . . . Frank E. Gannett, Rochester, N. Y., newspaper publisher, announced his candidacy for the Republican Presidential nomination.

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GREAT BRITAIN. Ronald H. Cross, Minister of Economic Welfare, told the House of Commons that Allied financial and sea control had strangled German economic life in the five months of war as much as two years of the World War had done. . . . The Government announced it would henceforth have a Minister accredited to the Italian Government as well as an Ambassador. . . . Prime Minister Chamberlain announced an Allied loan to Turkey of 43,500,000 pounds. . . . Mr. Chamberlain refused to give the real cause for the removal of Leslie Hore-Belisha as Secretary for War, but declared that none of the reasons advanced by newspapers was the real one. Mr. Hore-Belisha's speech in the House of Commons likewise shed little light on the situation. . . . In a note answering the protest of the twenty-one American republics over the *Graf Spee* battle, Britain rejected the 300-mile neutrality zone established by these nations. Before she could forego her rights under international law, Britain would have to be sure the zone proposal "would not provide German warships and supply ships with a vast sanctuary from which they could emerge to attack Allied and neutral shipping," the note said. . . . London also rejected the protest from the United States against British interference with American mails.

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CHINA-JAPAN. General Nobuyuki Abe, Premier of Japan, and his entire Cabinet resigned, and Admiral Mitsumasa Yonai took up the post of Premier. Regarding the "China incident," Premier Yonai said his Government will follow "the national policy which has been immutably fixed, and will extend all assistance to the new Central Government about to be formed in China." . . . Former Chinese Premier Wang Ching-Wei, scheduled to head the proposed Japanese-sponsored Central China Government, urged nationalist Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek to end resistance and cooperate in making peace with Tokyo.

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WAR. British airmen penetrated deep into Germany, dropped leaflets over Vienna and Prague, the London Air Ministry asserted. . . . Low-flying

Nazi fliers attacked ships off the British coast. Other Nazi airships flew over London, but dropped no bombs. . . . Three British submarines were lost. . . . Since the war's beginning, 138 British merchant ships of 503,329 gross tonnage have been sunk; 13 French vessels of 58,742 tonnage; 25 German ships of 137,675 tonnage, and 100 neutral vessels of 294,449 tonnage. . . . In the Finnish-Soviet war, Red air raiders staged mass bombing raids on Finn cities. During one raid on Helsinki alone, fifty bombs were dropped, with consequent death for civilians, fire and ruin for buildings. . . . Aid for the Finns in volunteers and materials were arriving in substantial manner. . . . In Sweden, former Foreign Minister Rickard Sandler demanded that Swedish troops be dispatched to Finland's Aland Islands in the Gulf of Bothnia. . . . While protesting their aid to the Finns, Moscow apologized to Sweden and Norway for its violations of their territory.

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FOOTNOTES. In evident reference to recent pronouncements of Nazi leaders encouraging soldiers to have children out of wedlock, Adolf Cardinal Bertram, Archbishop of Breslau, in a pastoral letter, warned that the Sixth Commandment was mandatory in war time as well as at any other time. . . . In Paris, the Chamber of Deputies, 521 to 2, voted to exclude all Communists from parliament and from all municipal government in France. . . . In Russia, the Soviet godless society announced: "The struggle against religion proceeds. The successes of 1939 were greater than those of the last twenty years combined. The banner of atheism has been carried into Central and Western Europe, and today threatens all the religions of Europe, particularly Catholicism." 38,000 godless commissars, responsible for the godless training of troops, were assigned to the Red Army. . . . In an official communiqué, Moscow denied the claims of Finnish successes. . . . Spain and France arranged a trade pact. France immediately commenced shipments of wheat to Spain. Generalissimo Franco offered to cooperate with Pope Pius in bringing peace to Europe and removing the peril of Communism. Franco ordered a complete revision of Spain's civil, commercial and penal laws and judicial procedure. Re-examination of about 150,000 cases tried by military courts would occur through the revision, and judicial procedure would be restored to a pre-war basis, reports indicated. . . . Yugoslavia's Regent, Prince Paul, signed the act for an independent parliament for Croatia in accordance with last August's Serbo-Croat agreement awarding autonomy to Croatia. . . . In Ecuador, a few army men crushed the attempted coup of former President Ibarra who ran behind in this year's Presidential election. . . . When the "principle of American solidarity" was adopted at the Buenos Aires Inter-American Conference in 1936 the Monroe Doctrine died, Mexico's President Cárdenas declared. . . . Opening the Inter-American Neutrality meeting, President Vargas of Brazil, declared the American republics have as much right to delineate a peace zone as belligerents have to outline a war zone.

SHAM CIVIL SERVICE

MORE interesting for what it omits than for what it includes, is the report of the Federal Civil Service Commission issued some weeks ago. The Commission admits that its work has been so severely criticized of late years that the public is beginning to look upon civil service as another of those promising reforms which are admirable in theory, but wholly impracticable. The Commission counters by attributing this growing public opinion to the "emergency requests" which it is frequently obliged to consider. It complies with these requests, or demands, "knowing that its normal operations will be seriously affected."

The Commission could have phrased its excuse more strikingly. What it really meant was, "There can be no genuine civil service, as long as the system can be controlled by partisan politics. The country can have a civil-service plan for appointment to Federal office, or it can have a loot system. But it cannot have both at the same time."

"Emergency request" is a term used by politicians to signify their demand for more patronage. No agency of the Government gets more lip-service and less actual support than the Civil Service Commission. Year by year, it makes its recommendations, and year by year the politicians in Congress and in the executive departments publicly approve these suggestions. The recommendations are then nullified on the plea of some "emergency."

Just one bill vetoed by the President on the ground that it provided for the exemption of prospective employees from civil-service requirements would do infinitely more than a dozen speeches and letters on "the imperative necessity" of preserving and extending civil service. We have yet to record a veto. Exemptions have increased during the last seven years, until they now apply to about one-third of the employees in the executive departments. If we rule out the fraudulent operation euphoniouly termed "covering in," they apply to an even larger percentage.

The most recent evasion of civil-service requirements is found in the 150,000 appointments made by the Bureau of the Census. Congress permitted the Bureau, but did not oblige it, to ignore civil service, and although the National League for Civil Service Reform urged the President to request the Bureau not to make use of this permission, no action was taken. As a result of criticism, the Bureau has been obliged to announce that these employees will be subjected to "non-competitive tests." In practice, this will probably mean that every employe who is not precisely a moron, or a former convict, will be retained, unless the local political boss files an objection.

It took about ten years of argument, and the assassination of President Garfield, to induce Congress to make a beginning with civil service. What must happen in this country before the patronage-and-loot system can be ousted by a genuine civil-service system?

EDITOR

A COMMON-SENSE

RECENTLY a French minister of state described the Soviet Embassy at Paris as a "nest of vipers." The phrase is strong, but it is likely that its author was well-informed. In any case, it reminds us that we have a Soviet Embassy at Washington. It also reminds us to ask what the Department of Justice, working through its sleepless G-men, is doing about those old forged passport cases? Thus far, only two culprits have been apprehended. Are Mr. Hoover's sleuths so busy with minor cases that they have no time for this work? Or have their tireless efforts been checked?

CROSS-EXAMINE

AN important decision has been announced by Chairman Smith, of the House Committee which is investigating the National Labor Relations Board. Up to the present, the examinations have been conducted by Edmund M. Toland, the Committee's counsel, with interruptions (unwarranted, it seems to us) by one of the Committee's members, and by Charles Fahy, general counsel to the Labor Board. But next week the examinations will be turned over to Mr. Fahy who will "be given the same latitude that Mr. Toland has had."

That is a move in the right direction. But it is a move that does not go far enough. Something more is needed.

It has been the contention of this Review for at least a quarter of a century, that witnesses appearing before these investigating committees should be subjected to cross-examination. Cross-examination after two weeks is better than none, but every one who has been obliged to sift evidence knows the invaluable aid that can be given, in getting at the truth, by immediate cross-examination.

It has long been evident that the chief purpose of some Congressional committees is not to get at the truth, but to cover it up, or to give publicity to crack-pot notions in economics and government. A favorite device of such committees is to announce with solemnity that in order to bring out every aspect of the case, the examinations will not be conducted according to the strict rules of evidence. This at once opens the door to suggestion, innuendo, hearsay testi-

ON-SENSE FRONT

WHEN any man, or society, is found guilty of "sedition," on a small scale or large, let fit punishment be meted out. But let us keep a sense of proportion. The Three Tailors of Tooley Street thundered in the name of the people of England, but no ministry fell. There are many Tooley Street groups in this country. Their dupes slink about with a sense of splendid guilt, but while most of them need skilled psychiatric care, few of them are dangerous. Let the Government commit them to its hospitals, and then begin to apprehend really dangerous radical plotters.

INE THE WITNESS

mony, and that worst of all falsehoods, the half-truth. The La Follette Committee, appointed to investigate violations of civil rights, is by no means the worst of these Committees, but it is a notable offender. Had its examinations been conducted under strict rules of evidence, it would have given us an immense amount of useful information. It is now too late for Senator La Follette to follow Chairman Smith's lead, but the Committee could employ its time usefully in compiling a volume of corrections and withdrawals.

Not the least useful function of cross-examination is that it engenders a spirit of exactness in the witness. The man who knows that he will be asked to account for every word he utters will restrict his testimony to the fewest possible number of his most carefully chosen words. Some weeks ago, a witness appearing before Chairman Smith vigorously defended the Board's custom of admitting hearsay testimony. Under questioning by Mr. Toland, this lady admitted, however, that she would demand that the rules of evidence be strictly observed, were she an employer on trial for violation of the Wagner Act.

The case for cross-examination is so clear that we wonder why congressional committees continue to ban it. They can go on under this absurd veto, and heap up whole libraries of useless volumes, or they can get back to common sense, and rescue the congressional investigating committee from the low estate to which it has unfortunately fallen.

HOW TO GET INTO WAR

WE have become accustomed, after seven years, to think in terms of an annual Federal deficit of two or three billion dollars. That is why we consider fifty millions a trifle, a mere bagatelle. But fifty millions, loaned by the United States to a country at war, is not a trifle. It is the first step on the road to war.

Those earnest souls who are now lobbying at Washington to induce Congress to authorize a loan of \$50,000,000 to Finland, mean well. But they overlook one important fact. The United States is a neutral nation.

Neutrality means little to the politicians, in Congress and out, who have yielded to the wiles of foreign propaganda. But to the American people, who hate war, and who are determined that this country shall not be involved in Europe's war, it means emphatically that this Government shall not take sides by affording financial aid to any belligerent.

To refrain from offering money to Germany or Russia, to England, France, or Finland, is the very minimum exacted by neutrality.

Our sympathies and our emotions urge us to help Finland, a small nation ferociously attacked by a brutal aggressor. But we must not substitute sympathy and emotion for calm consideration of the whole problem. Sympathy and emotion tend to focus on but one of its factors.

The problem does not concern Finland alone. Back of this proposed loan lie deeper questions. Are we ready, as a people, to support France and Great Britain? Are we ready to make war on Russia and Germany? Do we wish to take the line which, a quarter of a century ago, sent our young men across the sea to die in a wasteful, bitter, futile quarrel over the balance of power in Europe?

All these questions are involved in the loan to Finland.

In these new days, no one can quote approvingly Washington's foreign policy without inviting the comment from official quarters that he is a reactionary. Possibly that is why the President went back to Hamilton, Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln, in his address at the Jackson Day dinner, but omitted Washington. But it seems to us that political events in Europe and in the United States since 1796 prove the wisdom of Washington's inflexible policy. "Sympathy [note the word] sympathy for the favorite Nation [be it England, or France, or Finland] facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification."

"It also leads," continued Washington, "to concessions to the favorite Nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the Nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to be retained; and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in

the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. . . . Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and our prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor or caprice? . . . There can be no greater error than to expect or to calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion, which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard."

Have we not passed through that experience? Or do we need a more disillusioning experience than that afforded by the World War, to cure us?

If this is isolation, it is doctrine taught by Washington. We could do worse than accept it. To authorize a loan of \$50,000,000 to Finland will violate our neutrality as flagrantly as would a similar loan to France or to Great Britain. There is, of course, an accidental difference. Finland would probably repay us, not in propaganda, but in cash.

LOVE IS FIRST

POSSIBLY the story that a few years ago the octogenarian shoe-manufacturer, George F. Johnson, and the king of all fliver-makers, Henry Ford, debated the relations which should exist between employes and employers, is apocryphal. But it points a moral. According to the tale, Mr. Ford maintained that these relations should be governed by strict justice. Mr. Johnson contended that they should be initiated and maintained by love.

Mr. Johnson had the better of the argument. It is praiseworthy to aim at justice in dealing with our fellow-men, but the trouble is that when we aspire to do strict justice only, we are apt to fall short. What we must try to attain is love. When the Saviour of the world taught us that the first and greatest of all commandments is love of God above all, and love of our neighbor for His sake, He made no exceptions. He wished that law to govern every human activity, and to manifest itself in a man's relations with his employes quite as definitely as in his relations with his family and friends.

In his great Labor Encyclical, Pius XI warned employers against a bogus charity, often seen in this country. It shows itself in the employer who denies the worker a living wage, and gives him a basket of groceries at Christmas. Justice must indeed be done to all men, and the debts we owe in justice must be paid to the last farthing. But there are also debts that are due in charity, and as Saint Robert Bellarmine (after admitting that some lie obscurely on the line between justice and charity) wisely observed: "It is as grievous to be damned for want of charity as for want of justice." There is salutary wisdom in that conclusion.

When all employers adopt Mr. Johnson's theory of employer-employee relations, there will be no labor wars. Our battling unions might also learn from Mr. Johnson how to live in peace with one another, and to work in harmony with employers. Making love the goal, we shall assuredly not fail in justice, for love is the fulfilment of the law.

THIN SOIL

THE sower about whom we read in tomorrow's Gospel (Saint Luke, viii, 4-15) did not seem to be very careful, for some of the seed fell "by the wayside," some "upon a rock," other some, among thorns. But Our Lord was talking about fields which His hearers knew. Frequently, these were open, with foot-paths running across them, and the poorer farmer's plot would probably include some thin soil, and some areas from which the thorns and weeds could not be eradicated. Working carefully, the farmer would drop most of the seed on the good soil, but some would inevitably fall, or be blown on the path, or on thin soil, the "rock," and even among the thorns.

The discourses based on this Parable of the Sower, and the conclusions which theologians have deduced from it, are probably more numerous than all the tiny seeds which the sower took with him in a sack to his field. These discourses and conclusions are, of course, most valuable. But as we meditate upon the explanation which Our Lord Himself gave, it will be profitable to ask ourselves which we most resemble: the path, the thin soil, or the thorny ground? If we liken ourselves to the "good ground," we can be sure that while our hearts may be in the right place, our judgment is woefully at fault. It will save time, therefore, to rule out the good ground from the start.

Very few of us are acquainted, or ever were, with villains. Not many of the people we know are either dazzlingly white, or an unrelieved black. Probably most are a sort of plaid (as Bob Sawyer answered, when asked if he were a Buff or a Blue) or cross-barred, or a darkish white, or a grayish black. What we think of these people, all with some good qualities and with some not so good, they very likely, think of us. Both ratings are substantially accurate, with the second nearer the truth.

But why is it that they judge us rightly? That is the question we must answer. It is not probable that we "are choked with the cares and riches of this life," nor are our souls like a pathway that has been trampled into hardness, so that no seed can possibly draw any nourishment from it. But let us not be discouraged. Perhaps we can find ourselves in the other classification given in the Parable. Do we not often begin some good work "with joy," and soon lay it aside? We receive God's word gladly, but the soil in which we plant it is so thin that soon the seeking roots find the cold underlying rock. It never seems to occur to us that since we can add to and enrich this soil, it need not remain thin.

The Divine Husbandman does not expect the same harvest from every sower. He will be content when we bring Him the sheaves we have gathered after working perseveringly in the field that is our soul. What we must guard against is falling away "in time of temptation." To most of us spiritual farmers, the dangerous temptation is to shirk the work that is needed, if the harvest is to be worth while. Were we not taught years ago that "sloth" is a capital sin?

CORRESPONDENCE

NUNS IN FINLAND

EDITOR: Your issue for January 6 states:

Unpleasantly singular was the experience of the little group of Sisters of the Precious Blood from the United States, who arrived this Autumn in Finland, only to be forced to leave their new mission field at once owing to the war with Russia.

Permit me to tell the story of these Sisters a little more clearly. These Sisters arrived in Finland early in July of 1939, had just become well established in Helsinki and were quite ready for work, when hostilities threatened and the Finnish Government ordered evacuation of all women and children from Helsinki. Naturally enough, Bishop Cobben, not wishing to expose American citizens to any danger, advised the temporary withdrawal of the Sisters, who accordingly flew to Holland. Their stay in Holland, however, was of short duration.

With indomitable courage, the Sisters returned to their mission field in Helsinki, and were there but a short time when Russia surprised them with air raids. Nothing daunted, the missionaries remained at their post, and today are still caring for poor children at Sammatti, Ylitalo, "Angels of Peace in war-torn Finland," as some one beautifully said.

Their mission has not come to an end, and let us hope that, having remained with this staunch Finnish people in time of trial, the Sisters will the more readily be instrumental in bringing to them the Faith that once was theirs. More than that, let us hope that they be among those worthy pioneers who endeavor to carry on a work so dear to the heart of our Holy Father, the return of Russia to the Faith.

O'Fallon, Mo.

A SISTER

SAINT AND SINGER

EDITOR: Readers of Doran Hurley's charming and touching sketch, *Prayer to the Saints* (AMERICA, January 13) will recall that Dinnie Shea identified Saint Thomas More with the Irish minstrel of *Believe Me If All Those Enduring Young Charms* (incidentally, Byron's great friend and biographer) on the ground that the Saint's own family name was really Moore.

If I understand Mr. Hurley aright, he meant this merely as a highly amusing piece of Irishry, but there is some contemporary authority for the fact that there is a great deal to be said for a part of Mr. Shea's assumption.

If we can believe that great writer but intellectual trifle, the late George Moore (and few people can, especially on the subject of the Church in Ireland), Saint Thomas More had, in fact, Irish descendants, and his ancestral portrait hung at

Moore Hall (Mayo), though, if my memory is correct, the building, with its portraits, was destroyed during the recent troubles. My authority lies in George Moore's own memoirs of the Celtic Revival, *Hail and Farewell*.

Incidentally, I wonder whether the Catholic reader realizes what a veritable jewel he possesses in Doran Hurley, whose English style resembles Thackeray in its fluent, running quality, and whose *Old Parish* and Mrs. Crowley sketches are often as edifying as they are exquisite.

Worcester, Mass.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT

CIVIL RIGHTS

EDITOR: I cannot see that the question of civil rights is at all relevant to the problem of how to deal with the Communist party in the United States. There is no constitutional right to be disloyal; and the obligations of Party membership, which bind members of the Communist party to the policies of an international organization controlled from abroad, are intrinsically incompatible with the loyalty every American citizen owes to his country. The fact that, while we are at peace with the Soviet Union, such disloyalty may be relatively harmless makes no difference in the fundamental principle involved.

Why, then, cannot the Congress of the United States simply outlaw the Communist party, making membership in it, present or past, legal ground for annulling the citizenship of any American, naturalized or native, on whom it can be proved? I don't like that sort of retroactive legislation, but if we gave the Communists the loophole, they would escape by simply dissolving their Party organization before we could lay our hands on them.

If this plan requires a constitutional amendment, then let us have the amendment. I can think of no other way to outlaw Communism without endangering legitimate differences of opinion and legitimate freedom of expression.

New York, N. Y.

J. H. B. HOFFMANN

CENSORSHIP

EDITOR: Patrick J. Cox (AMERICA, January 13) writes as if he were in violent disagreement with me. His ideas and mine, as a matter of truth, largely coincide. He fails to appreciate only the major point of my communication, which is skepticism that government censorship can function effectively.

However devoutly it is to be wished, the laws of God and the laws of man do not today level off eye to eye. There is, indeed, no immediate prospect that the morals of Catholics can safely be entrusted to civil control. Mercy killings, infanticide and abor-

tion are as much murder in God's eyes as any other sort. If our courts and popular theories wink at such crimes of violence, how can it be expected that the nuances of morality in print and on the screen will be decently and rightly interpreted by Government censors?

Man's conscience, I still maintain, is the ultimate censor and Catholic theology can be its only true and certain guide. Out of its teaching grows censorship for Catholics by Catholics, which operates so well that its influence is exerted far beyond the Church on press and film at their sources. Witness the Legion of Decency and the similar crusade which is ridding newsstands of unwholesome magazines. Taking the profits out of filth can be as effective as jail sentences.

Even if good legislation were a possibility, laws and their enforcement officers could not change persons of low and vulgar tastes into refined individuals of delicate sensibilities. Moral training is a requisite. There are already countless statutes calculated to suppress indecent books, periodicals and motion pictures. Successful prosecutions have sent some offenders to prison.

The so-called teeth in the laws, however, do not so often bite and may more frequently be imagined as set in a broad grin at the debates over art and dirt which desecrate our judicial chambers. If the legal opinions handed down were sound, there might be some wisdom in believing in Government censorship.

Present evidence prompts me to reiterate that Catholics avoid sin in literature and the arts by exercising their wills.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

H. J. A. McNAMARA

INTELLECTUAL

EDITOR: In a letter to AMERICA (December 23), Dr. Thomas Verner Moore, commenting on my review of his excellent book, *Cognitive Psychology*, takes exception to my remarks about his treatment of the functions of the *Intellectus Possibilis* and the *Intellectus Agens* and of the problem of the origin of the primitive idea. Incidentally, he states that if I mean to imply that "the passive intellect activates its own species, any such concept is not Scholastic."

It seems to me that Dr. Moore has missed the point of my remarks. I did not raise the question as to whether or not the passive intellect was the store-house of the *species intelligibiles* or whether or not the passive intellect was identified with intellectual memory. The point I stressed was that, to my mind, the passage quoted from the author created the impression that the *Intellectus Possibilis* is a purely passive faculty and that the *Intellectus Agens* produces the act of formal intellectual perception. If this is the author's meaning, I must repeat: "Many Scholastic philosophers will disagree."

In answer to my criticism of his treatment of the origin of the primitive idea, Dr. Moore quotes from Saint Thomas the passage in which the Angelic Doctor proposes the question: "Does that

which is more universal arise first in our intellectual knowledge?" Here again, Dr. Moore seems to have misunderstood me. For the question discussed in the passage quoted is quite distinct from what is commonly understood by Scholastic philosophers as "the problem of the origin of the primitive idea."

Finally, Scholastic philosophers quite commonly hold that the *Intellectus Possibilis*, determined by the *species intelligibilis impressa*, elicits the act of formal intellectual perception. If, in this process, the *Intellectus Possibilis* can be said to "activate its own species," I must again disagree with Dr. Moore's statement that "such a concept is not Scholastic."

Weston, Mass.

JOHN F. DUSTON, S.J.

HOME MISSIONS

EDITOR: Congratulations are certainly in order for *All Along the Home Front*. It is high time we so-called American Catholic Actionists were jolted into a realization of the fact that after all we have quite enough to do in the mission line right here in God-blessed America. And the article was just that—a jolt.

I was somewhat disappointed, though, at the lack of prominence given to home-mission problem number one—the American Negro. Not that I mean to accuse AMERICA of any lack of interest in him. But the facts bear constant repetition, especially in an article of the sort referred to, that ninety-eight per cent of black America is still on the outside looking in as far as we are concerned; that we have in the Negro both a problem and an opportunity; that one of the leading obstacles to solution of that problem is ourselves, the Catholic laity.

For, in the words of Xavier University's magnificent motto, "God's greatest work on earth is man; Man's master work is leading man to God." Here is a nation within a nation, a race within a race. How about a little more popularity for the priests, the Sisters that are leading them to God? And for the many serious difficulties which oppose their march God-ward?

Southboro, Mass.

ROBERT G. HOWES

NAME CHANGE

EDITOR: I should like to point out a minor discrepancy in John J. O'Connor's splendid article, *All Along The Home Front There Sound Cries For Help* (AMERICA, December 30).

In his summary of the Catholic organizations laboring among the Negroes of America, Mr. O'Connor includes the Lyons African Missionaries. It so happens that at a general chapter of this society on July 5, 1937, the name was changed to the African Missions Society. It is under this title that members of the Irish Province, with the Very Rev. Anthony P. McAndrew, S.M.A., Superior, opened during September the first American novitiate and seminary of this Society at Silver Spring, Md., not far from Washington.

Silver Spring, Md.

JOHN V. MULVEY

LITERATURE AND ARTS

MIRACLES STILL HAPPEN EVEN ON MAIN STREET

OSCAR J. WEBERG

THOSE of us who knew Walter Pierce when he was made manager of the Holman Store five years ago often wondered how long he could hold out. Normally Walter was a likable chap with a host of friends. Now that he had been made the manager of the largest department store in the largest city of the State, Walter felt that no one had greater responsibilities than he had. He was the first one in the building in the morning, the last one out at night. He checked every department constantly, notions, ready-to-wear, furniture, beauty parlor. Each had its own department head, but Walter carried every detail of every department to bed with him. He had breakfast, lunch and dinner with the problems of his store.

For awhile his friends smiled at his tantrums when at the least provocation he would fly into a rage. They tried to tell him that he would have to relax, get away from the store for the single pleasures that he used to enjoy and to live like a normal human being. But every suggestion of his friends threw him into jitters.

A simple error on the part of a saleslady called for a "bawling out" before any and everyone present. The delivery boys were on the carpet three and four times a day. His beauty operators were quitting to start shops of their own because of the abuse he had heaped upon them over trifles. The advertising department was afraid to try anything new in the way of promotions for fear that immediate results would be unprofitable and the originator of the idea would be fired. Traveling salesmen for firms whose goods he had to have to uphold prestige were passing him up after two or three verbal abuses.

Things got to a place where the old reliable House of Holman was as jumpy as home-talent dress rehearsal. Orders were shouted, salespeople were rushing back and forth, the store was in a continual turmoil. Customers felt it and stayed away. Walter's best salespeople found employment elsewhere, and the grand old store that three generations had built was headed for the rocks. That was three years ago.

Last week I was back in Springston. I wondered

what had happened to the House of Holman and Walter Pierce. Probably both were only memories. But no; there was the same name on the brass plaques on either side of the main entrance. Surely Walter had been replaced by a new manager of less violent moods, for everything seemed to be humming along with a quiet pressure that indicates a good substantial retail business.

I asked the floor walker to direct me to the manager, but before he could comply I felt a quiet, firm hand on my shoulder. Good old Walter, like the days before he had been made manager of the House of Holman! I looked at him as though the dead had come back to life. For hadn't the fiery, impetuous, high-strung Walter fairly kicked me out of the store three years ago? I think he sensed my unasked question.

"If you have a few minutes let's go some place and talk. Seems good to have you drop in again."

I followed him to his office. The salespeople smiled as we passed. Customers greeted Walter cordially. No jitters now. Smooth, efficient clockwork. The House of Holman was prospering. The very building seemed happy.

Once in his private office Walter quietly closed the door.

"You don't have to ask me. I know what you're thinking. You haven't been back for three years. You expected anything but what you found here. Others may have wondered, but they had three years to get used to the change. You have to take it in one step so it seems bigger to you."

"You and I were close friends years ago, buddies, until the store made me a madman. Things were at a climax when you left town. I am ashamed of the way that I raved at you the last time we were together and you tried to talk some sense into my head. Sure, I know you're going to continue to be generous. You want to say that I was tired, nerved up and all that. Let's check that. It's over with. I've had to learn to forget a lot of things. Let's get back to what turned me around in my tracks. Few know the story, but I want to tell it to you . . . I owe it to you."

"I was at Mass. I had gone to church mechani-

cally that morning as I had come to perform all duties which at one time had been sacred. It couldn't have been what Father Mathew said, for I don't remember what he was saying. Someone I didn't see seemed to put his hand on my shoulder. Someone I didn't hear seemed to talk to me. My jitters seemed to leave me. It was so quiet inside me and so comforting. I didn't want to leave that place.

"It was my first relief in months. It would be worthwhile living if I could always feel like that. I stayed on after the others had left. Alone in the big church it was quiet. So different from the confusion of the big store. Could I carry that quietness with me when I left, or must I leave it in the church and again start letting every contact with the world bounce me around like a helpless piece of driftwood in a swirling eddy?

"I left the church, but not to go back to the store as I had on other returns from Mass. I drove to a quiet spot in the woods ten miles out of the city. Could I carry the serenity of His presence with me when I left the church? Yes, I could, in the quietness of that woodland retreat. I felt it and was happy. I stayed on for hours. I was too happy to feel hunger. It was getting dark now. I would steal back to the store when no one was around and see if I could still carry with me this new feeling of a serene comfort and an understanding Presence, a quiet assurance that there was a way out of all difficulties.

"It was the same store I had left the night before with a feeling of defeat. It was quiet now. The salespeople were at home. Things were in order. I went back to my private office. There was my desk all in confusion; my secretary knew better than to move a thing. Panic started to grip me again. I was losing that which I had held on to all day. But I mustn't lose it! If I did, all would be lost. I was afraid to turn back to the main floor of the store. Afraid it would all come back, a mass of conflicting details.

"I opened a door into a little closet. I don't know why. I entered the little room and shut the door. Here I would get rid of that monster that had suddenly seized me after a day of comforting peace and quiet—the first I had known in months. I was on my knees now. That helped. And again I felt that Hand on my shoulder. I heard that Voice. It was coming back to me! That Presence that had brought me the first day of sanity I had had for months. It was all clear now. I would make that little room my haven—my sanctuary. Father Mathew would help me. I would go to him in the morning."

Walter stopped talking now. He had scarcely taken a breath since he started his story. I was afraid to take one for fear it would startle him and he might lose the drift of his story. We sat there quietly. Neither said a word. Friends can do that and both understand. Walter spoke again.

"You understand. I know you do. You're not a member of my Faith, but I want you to be the only other person aside from Father Mathew and myself to enter my sanctuary."

He opened the door of the little room. There on the wall opposite us was a dimly lighted crucifix and on the soft green carpet a prayer bench. Walter made the Sign of Cross as he knelt. I understood.

We stepped out of the little room and dropped into chairs in his office.

"That retreat in there is the answer to the question you were going to ask me. Every morning and many times a day, especially in trying moments, I enter my retreat. Then I can go back out and face the House of Holman and all is well."

THE SOLDIER'S CHARM

UNDER the auspices of the Catholic Youth Organization of the Archdiocese of New York a prize contest in American Catholic History was conducted in the parish schools for ten weeks toward the end of 1939. The written papers submitted at the close gave special evidence that the pupils in the schools were being given a very practical training in the Catholic historical records of their country and were profiting by the instruction.

It is not amiss to say that the textbooks in history now used in these and other diocesan schools, and prepared for them by Dr. Philip J. Furlong, President of Cathedral College, and members of the Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of St. Dominic, Sisters of St. Joseph, and other Religious Institutes are prime factors in this because of the attractive and modern methods in which the topics are handled, so far in advance of old-time textbooks on history.

One young gent, age 12, entitled his effort "The Soldier's Charm," and set down in his paper this relation of what he considered the subject merited:

It was a frost bitten night in the county hospital for another great man came into this world named John Carroll. John's parents were very rich and had servants John used to actually argue with the maid that he should run errands instead of her. John was the kind of a boy everybody loved. For God must have given him one hundred percent talent and understanding. John besides being a very little jolly fellow, he also was serious, so serious that one day he picked out his vocation, the Priesthood.

John when at the seminary was very smart but also very pious. He especially prayed to the Blessed Virgin to make him a good priest and later on you shall learn his prayer was answered. John one day finally heard the English Bishop ordain him.

Soon after he was ordained the Revolution broke out and John gave last rites to the wounded. When the soldiers were waiting at the dead of night, one would say, "I wonder if will come out of this redcoat attack" and another would cry out, "don't worry men Farther John is with us it's a sure victory." The words which the latter cried were true for nearly every place there was a battle and John was there it was a victory for the patriots. After the Revolutionary War the Pope wondered who shall be bishop of United States. Benjamin Franklin suggested John and so he was made Bishop John Carroll first bishop of the United States of America. Finally like nearly all essays end he passed away on June 14, 1863.

Any student of our history who can display such a lively imagination as this certainly ought to be encouraged to make further research studies.

T. F. M.

BOOKS

PORTRAIT OF THE MAID OF LOURDES

BERNADETTE OF LOURDES. By Margaret Gray Blanton.
Longmans, Green and Co. \$2.50

THERE must be whole libraries of books about Lourdes. The little French town, the apparitions to Bernadette, and the cures have fascinated many. But a book by a Protestant, so well written and, in consequence, with such genuine popular appeal, the product of careful research and quite lacking in prejudice, is unusual.

Mrs. Blanton, trained as a psychologist, an American from Nashville, accompanied her husband, a psychiatrist, to Lourdes; and while there she became deeply interested in the character of Bernadette and set out to study it in earnest. She went to contemporary sources and in particular to Père Cros' monumental three-volume compilation of the evidence before the Bishops' Commission. The result is this book where, from a purely human angle but with great insight, she presents a portrait of the young peasant girl who was so singularly honored by the "little white Damizelo," and who, in consequence was obliged to live the rest of her life in what we should call a sort of gold-fish bowl—deprived even in her convent retreat of the privacy she coveted.

Curious and pious visitors were always wanting a look at her. She was courteous and complying when religious obedience ordained that they be humored but, when left to herself, a quick natural wit could effect a rescue. Meeting a chance stranger in the chapel or parlor who, not knowing her, would question, "Ma soeur, do you suppose I could see Bernadette?" she would reply, "Why certainly, madame, just wait a moment for she is going to go through that door." And she would proceed to go.

Mrs. Blanton paints, too, a vivid description of the Soubirous family life, and the whole locale—the grotto of the Massabielle, the white eglantine, the mountainous countryside rooted deep in French and Spanish traditions, the small provincial town which once had been captured by the English under the Black Prince; a surely accurate picture of the Lourdes Bernadette knew before 1858, when she lived at her father's mill and gathered sticks beside the swift flowing Gave—before the apparitions took place and long before the Basilica or railroad were so much as dreamed of.

Mrs. Blanton has not tried to treat particularly of Bernadette's interior life; and the account of any Saint told with such a hiatus must necessarily strike incongruously on Catholic eyes. Omitting the supernatural, there can be no real understanding of Bernadette, and their must be, as here, much misunderstanding. Still we can be grateful for so clear, so orderly, an exposition of externals.

PAULA KURTH

WORTH A LIBRARY OF COMMENTARIES

DOCUMENTS ON AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS, JANUARY, 1938-JUNE, 1939. Edited by S. Shepard Jones and Denys P. Myers. World Peace Foundation. \$3.75.

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changes and their accompanying documents of the last two years. Practically every important public document dealing with the United States and its foreign relations in this period of (January 1, 1939 to June, 1939) is here published in order to save such memories from thrombosis, and even to be of supplementary assistance to those geniuses who have kept a foreign relations scrapbook. For research students, professors of history, columnists, reporters, and all who must be on the *qui vive* in regard to modern international developments, this collection is a gold mine.

As a repertory of strikingly dramatic documents no justice can be done to the meaning of the collection in a brief review. Official documents are here contained on American foreign policy and principles as enunciated by President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull, Inter-American Relations including the Lima Conference Declaration, American-Mexican Relations including those which deal with the expropriation of American properties, the policy of the United States in the Far East, including matters connected with the *Panay* incident and other American interests in China, the Reciprocal Trade Agreements, American policy in the Munich Conference crisis, and the final suppression of Czecho-Slovakia, the Spanish Embargo, and such additional matters as the Tripartite Monetary Agreement, Neutrality, Peace and National Defense. They are the official documents, complete, with no suppression of challenges made and replies given.

The book is published by the World Peace Foundation, the organization founded in 1910 by Edwin Ginn, educational publisher. A reference should be made here to this organization. Some people would criticize it for leaning too heavily on the side of the League of Nations. Probably the final word on the League was said by the Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, before Christmas in his peace plan, stating that the League requires revision. The same great authority in the encyclical *Summi Pontificatus* noted the fact that legitimate patriotism is natural and lawful. Not so the League. Much wealth of time, labor and money has been spent by the League in propagandizing an ideal cosmopolitanism. Yet Burke, Mazzini, Coleridge, and other great thinkers held that the only genuine cosmopolitanism that could be of worth was that which comes by antecedence of patriotism. They saw that such abstractions as "humanity," "unity" and all similar conceptions must be useless unless they gather up into themselves the rich and varied content of the habitual ties and tried allegiances which alone can give substance to the idea and service of human existence. The World Foundation might turn its research resources with profit to investigation of this phase of the question.

The present volume, however, carries out the avowed purpose of the Foundation—to be objective. Though the compilers of the collection furnish background details for the documents, these details are completely ungarbled. As a compilation of documents it is a work of impeccable editing. To one who cares to do his own thinking, the work is worth a whole library of commentaries on the international scene of the past two years.

PATRICK J. HIGGINS

THEY BUILT A HOME WITH THEIR OWN HANDS

LOVE IN THE SUN. By Leo Walmsley. Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$2.50

THE ordinary things of life, told simply and quietly, are likely enough to be the strongest, most compelling theme for drama or fiction. It was this simplicity that made *Our Town* one of the outstanding pieces of modern drama, and it is this same calm serenity, too, that makes of *Love in the Sun* a work of art. So unobtrusively does its tempo move that one almost forgets the narrator who tells his own story. It is rich in fact and incident,

but it is the warm richness of the sun and the sea and the cliffs and the fulness of life. Its very artlessness reveals the artist in the author. Yet for all its calmness and serenity it carries a gripping suspense.

It is Christmas Day that the man comes to the depression-struck Cornish town of St. Jude in search of a quiet retreat where he can rebuild his life away from the accumulation of misfortune that pursues him. Instead of a little cabin aboard some old derelict boat he hopes to find, he chances upon a hut, falling to ruin, filthy with the neglect of previous tenants. Here he and the woman begin their life anew in this secluded shelter away from prying neighbors. They scrub and paint, and from the odds and ends they collect or fashion with their own hands, they make a cozy home. From garden and sea and specimens furnished to a biological laboratory they eke out a simple, complete existence, while he works, according to inspiration, on his first and other novels that eventually bring success. There are worries and dreaded moments, to be sure, in their almost idyllic existence that make for a complete picture.

This is emphatically not just another back-to-nature novel. It is a beautifully written story of a great all-absorbing love between a man and woman, intensified by a serenity, genuineness and originality that make it distinctly different. Its bright moments, which are many, glow with a contagious cheeriness, and over the darkness and discouragement that loom in the background and at times threaten to absorb the man, the girl stands unflinching in her fearless assurance that their fondest dreams will be realized.

Easily as it might have been perfect, Mr. Walmsley's novel is not without its glaring defects. Why did he have to trump up an intrigue in order to "rig" a motive for his hero's and heroine's secrecy when a hundred other motives would have served his purpose equally as well? Then, too, apart from the man's frequent and uncalled for use of God's name there is not a single aspiration from either man or woman that looks beyond the purely human realm of happiness they attempt to create.

ALLAN MAYNARD

BOOKS IN BRIEFER REVIEW

THE DARK WHEEL. By S.M.C. P. J. Kenedy and Sons. \$2

IF you want to meet truth, touch beauty, and feel Heaven, read the latest offering from the hand that wove for us, *Brother Petroc's Return*. S. M. C. pens a novel crammed with other-worldliness, yet vibrantly real and definitely practical. You will enjoy the quest of Greville White, a quest that takes a modern English atheist, very intellectual, quite self-satisfied, somewhat cynical, back to and through the England of monastery and peace, doublet and hose, tankard and inn, palace politics and dungeon, no-Popery and persecution. The temporal changes are done cleverly and colorfully. The story unfolds in a smooth, graphic, attractive and refreshing manner.

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JOSEPH G. MADDEN

AMERICA FACES SOUTH. By T. R. Ybarra. Dodd, Mead and Co. \$3

THIS book is a happy combination of bits of travel through parts of South America and advice concerning the improving of our trade relations with the southern continent. In describing the cities and peoples, the writer,

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a native of one of our neighbors through his father, exhibits his sympathy and his powers of observation; through a lively style, a good selection of material, and a will not to let trade statistics overcrowd, he has turned out an excellent account.

Concerning trade, it is clear that principally Germany and England, and to a lesser degree Japan and Italy, are the competitors of the United States for the market in South America. The principal point emphasized is that South America is not one country which one policy will fit; it is a continent of twenty countries, and they have their differences. The reviewer finds that the author has failed almost entirely to discuss one feature of relations with the South, the question of religion; and this is not an unimportant question.

J. CRAGMYR

MARY AUSTIN WOMAN OF GENIUS. By Helen MacKnight Doyle. Gotham House, New York. \$3

NO more sympathetic biographer could Mary Austin have wished for herself than her friend of long years' standing, Dr. Doyle. Misunderstood even as a child by her mother, Miss Austin lived for the most part a lonely and unhappy life. Her marriage was a failure, and her one child a mental defective. Wherever she lived, neighbors soon came to judge her queer, as she was. It was her habit, to cite but one example, in times of emotional stress to let down her hair even when on the street, because "it pressed so against her neck." Obviously a character of such sort needs very sympathetic portrayal. Dr. Doyle, in her effort at tolerant interpretation, turns often to the textbooks of the new psychology, which (however much or little they may explain) certainly do not endow an uninspiring life with qualities that make for exciting reading.

Undoubtedly, Mary Austin has merited a secure place in American letters. Her output was prodigious and varied; she was a novelist, poet, short-story writer and essayist. Her religion bordered on the mystic; she shrank from the God of the Bible, but found consolation in His presence in nature.

It is improbable that this book about Miss Austin will increase to any extent the circle of those who admire and enjoy books by her.

ROBERT A. HEWITT

RECKLESS ANGEL. By Mrs. Belloc Lowndes. Longmans, Green and Co. \$2

IT is murder and romance again. An aging beauty who holds chivalrous young Lord Bridlington in thrall is killed, implicating the gay, charming Angel Tindall. There are emeralds, planted pistols, anonymous letters, a pair of perfidious thieves who are at the same time social climbers and no end of complications which are as usual resolved by the courage and faith of Bridlington and his Reckless Angel. Well written in the old-fashioned style which calls a heart-throb a heart-throb instead of an increase of metabolism, *Reckless Angel* is not to be taken seriously.

FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY

TOO MUCH COLLEGE. By Stephen Leacock. Dodd, Mead and Co. \$2

IN his humorous way Mr. Leacock continues to be able to write up the complaints which all of us have and about which we are prone to be bitter. His old flair for compounding wisdom and quips is a talent of his age as it was of his youth. *Too Much College* means that education has overweighted us, devours too much of the time of the young, gluts collegians with too many fol-de-rol courses. The principal arms which the Frankenstein monster employs are courses in psychology, education, and sociology.

The author has much wisdom on the "how" of teaching. He admits that at times his method of castigation is through half truths, but "a half truth in argument, like a half brick, carries better." Indeed, his half truths are, most of them, whole truths, save a few aspersions on Scholasticism, which, if the author believes "substituted words for things and grammar for thought" is a whole error. Mr. Leacock simply does not know enough about Scholasticism.

W. J. MCGARRY

ART

AFTER one has been writing a column like this long enough, one's mail begins to fill up with publicity material. In most cases such printed matter is of very little interest. The good and exciting things seem to assume that you will find them out for yourself. But last week a huge piece of pink newsprint—about the size of a healthy tabloid newspaper—arrived on my desk which really deserves attention and is hereby getting it. This monstrous hand-bill announces a show at the Baltimore Museum of Art (January 12-February 11) entitled "Modern Painting Isms and How They Grew," which is a nice idea to begin with.

It is almost impossible to write much about an exhibition like this without seeing it, for a great number of the pictures are from private collections and, not being by any means an expert in the art of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, I just do not know those privately owned paintings. But the names are good, and the variety of "isms" puts the political theorists to shame. Here they are: Academicism (which somehow seems to me to be cheating a little. Why add *ism*?), Romanticism, Realism, Impressionism, Post Impressionism, Cubism, Fauvism, Surrealism, Primitivism. That is really a pretty impressive showing when you consider that it takes in a mere century, and that in France.

There is a moral to all this. It seems to me that when we find it necessary to classify two or three score recent painters into eight separate "isms," it is a sign that something smells in the State of Denmark. What smells seems to me fairly obvious; it is a thing I have been harping on for a long time. If artists—and good ones too—have no real feeling that they are accomplishing something needful for the society in which they live, it seems very likely that time and thought will hang heavy on their hands and it is equally likely that they will begin thinking up systems of painting, of art, calculated to give them something to fight for and about, and thus make life interesting.

I do not mean for one second to detract from what I acknowledge is the real genius of such men as Picasso, Matisse, Rouault, Derain, Cézanne, Van Gogh when I say that that is precisely the position in which they found themselves. They doubtless primarily wanted to be good painters. In the modern world that is a dull business, for no one really cares very much about good painting except the painters themselves, and they cannot live by taking in one another's canvases. So "isms" developed. They proved not only means for making life exciting; they also turned out to be fine publicity. So there you are, and art continues to be unhappy in its pathetic divorce from society.

Some time back the director of the Steuben Glass Company, one John Gates, gave birth to the blessed idea (with Henri Matisse as godfather) of commissioning first class living artists to make designs for some of his firm's glassware. An exhibition of designs by twenty-seven artists at the Steuben headquarters in New York is the result. Rarely have I seen a more joyful thing. Most of the artists—Curry, Noguchi, O'Keefe, Cocteau, Gill, Bone, Léger, Benton, Wood, Kroll, Dali, Matisse, Dufy are a few of the names—have all their lives worked in a totally different medium, yet the designs they have made are beautifully adapted to glass and show that men of real talent can do what they have a mind to, especially if the doing brings them a little closer to utility. Indeed, the worst thing about the glass shown is the shapes of some of the vessels which bear the artists' designs and for which presumably the artists were least responsible. Maybe in time Steuben will live up in its part of the work to the high standards of the men they have employed for the "decoration."

HARRY LORIN BINNS

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THEATRE

THEATRICAL GRAVES. Most of the dramatic columns in New York's newspapers and magazines became obituary departments over the holiday season, chronicling the swift passing of unworthy plays. We are always prepared to sympathize with the debacles of ambitious beginners, but it is rarely indeed that so many of our experienced playwrights have let us down almost simultaneously. In the month of December alone almost half a dozen did just this—not gently, but with rude shocks.

Last week I gave in this column my impression of the severe jolt Mr. Paul Vincent Carroll administered to his audiences in *Kindred* during the few performances before his late offering was mercifully withdrawn. An equal shock was given us almost simultaneously by J. B. Priestley, who has sent us such good books and plays in the past that we feel almost as much abused by him as by young Mr. Carroll—whose work we Catholics had been following with such pride and hope. Like Mr. Carroll, Mr. Priestley is probably upset by the contemplation of the European war.

"Conspicuously bad work" is a very fair description of Mr. Priestley's latest dramatic offering—*When We Are Married* which briefly depressed its small audiences at the Lyceum Theatre. As with most of the dramatic failures throughout the holiday season, the play was performed by an excellent company, but that made its unworthiness even more of a disaster. To any sympathetic playgoer it is actually painful to see fine actors and actresses struggling in the swamp of a hopeless production; and that is the spectacle *Kindred*, *When We Are Married*, and several others presented to us during the Yuletide season.

Mr. Priestley, who had a very simple story to tell, became in his narrative almost as hopelessly confused as Carroll was in his play. Both men gave their audiences the impression that they were writing with three-quarters of their minds on something else; and their audiences, realizing this, became the bored and resentful guests of indifferent hosts. Mr. Priestley pained us even more than Mr. Carroll did—for Priestley tried to be humorous, and was as dead in the effort as only a certain type of Englishman can be. Mr. Carroll remained in a state of unlifted gloom throughout his drama, and this condition was the sole one connected with the play which his audiences shared with him.

To get back to Mr. Priestley. His play told us about three married couples who were soon to celebrate their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. They had been jogging along together more or less comfortably, but as the anniversary celebration was about to take place it suddenly appeared that their marriages had not been legal. The next step was clear enough, and Mr. Priestley took it with a hearty shout of British laughter. The couples realized their past unhappiness and got together in new adjustments. The most downtrodden husband and the unhappiest wife plunged briskly into a flirtation based on fellow-suffering. A tyrannical husband was suppressed and a flirtatious husband was claimed by a bar maid who took his attentions at the bar too seriously.

You do not want any more, gentle reader? Neither did the audience. But let your hearts dwell for a moment on the sufferings of a fine company made up of Estelle Winwood, Ann Andrews, J. C. Nugent, A. P. Kaye, Tom Powers and Alison Skipworth, to mention only a few players who struggled in this morass of lines and situations. When the three couples were found to be really married, after all, the general relief lay solely in the fact that players and audience could then go home.

The shock of seeing these two plays during the Christmas season was pretty bad, but fate and producers have their gracious moods. No new plays at all were put on for two weeks after Christmas! **ELIZABETH JORDAN**

FILMS

THE FIGHTING 69TH. Films which portray real characters before they have been dead at least a hundred years assume the double burden of satisfying survivors and being entertaining besides. But in the case of *Father Duffy* and his bright company, eulogy and entertainment are not so disparate after all. William Keighley's direction of this war story is more reflective than most, capitalizing on battle scenes to lend movement to a film absorbed with character but seizing plausible opportunities for statements of principle. The action revolves about a swaggering coward whose disobedience under fire almost wipes out his regiment but who makes amends in a crucial battle and dies within the Church he had once given up. *Father Duffy* himself considered religion an integral part of the life of his regiment, and it is a prominent factor in the film. As the tolerant, sympathetic and courageous Chaplain, Pat O'Brien dominates the action, with Jeffrey Lynn as Joyce Kilmer, George Brent as Colonel "Wild Bill" Donovan, James Cagney, Alan Hale and Frank McHugh contributing able portraits. Closing with an impressive prayer, this is a human document, marginal perhaps in the history of the Great War, but speaking volumes of the idealism with which the common soldier fought. It is warmly recommended to all. (Warner)

OF MICE AND MEN. John Steinbeck's novel embodies a decadent tendency of modern hard-boiled literature, to substitute the abnormal for the normal and to produce brutal shocks rather than natural reactions. It is a study of feeble-mindedness which may call up pity from a humanitarian but not a dramatic motive. If Mr. Steinbeck cannot move an audience except by exploiting a moron, he is a novelist only in the limited sense of the *roman noir*; he is a holdover from the Gothic school, however encrusted with modern realism. The plot concerns two migratory workers, one of whom is a feeble-minded giant whose strength is continually getting him into trouble. The other attempts to care for him but tragedy overtakes them when the moron kills a ranch-owner's wife in a moment of panic. That the film has moments of impact, and intensity only emphasizes its cumulative unpleasantness. Lon Chaney, Jr., Burgess Meredith, Charles Bickford and Betty Field are capable in a production which may interest the very adult devotees of stark drama. (United Artists)

THE SHOP AROUND THE CORNER. It is still somewhat of a novelty to find a production as polished as this exerting all its deftness in behalf of wholesome humor. The use of subtlety for the sole purpose of getting something past the censor is common enough to make this Ernst Lubitsch fancy a reinforced delight. While the atmosphere is Continental, the morals are not, and the one implication of infidelity is handled with restraint. Two young people in a Budapest store, who cannot get along during business hours, unwittingly carry on a romantic, anonymous correspondence with one another. Lubitsch handles the fragile situation with such assurance that it never appears as wire-drawn as it should. James Stewart and Margaret Sullavan are excellent in an engaging trifle for adults. (MGM)

THE INVISIBLE MAN RETURNS. This is a sequel to the H. G. Wells story which incorporates some nonsense of its own. Sir Cedric Hardwicke is cast as a villain who is exposed by his intended victim, a man under sentence of death, when the latter makes himself invisible and escapes from prison. Vincent Price, in the title rôle, cannot be seen, and there will be those who will have the same complaint about the whole picture. (Universal)

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THAT important split-second decisions must be made not only by highly placed executives and football referees but also by people in humbler walks of life was clearly demonstrated, as ingenuity solved knotty problems that were washed up into humble lives by the week's current. . . . A Philadelphia motorman on a one-man trolley car was held up and robbed at the end of the line. How, on his return trip, to give change to new passengers when he had no change—this was his dilemma. Thinking quickly, he started his trolley, refused to stop for passengers, thus obviating the necessity of giving them change. . . . In a New England city, a conflagration had to break out just as the city firemen, attired in full evening dress, dancing pumps and stiff shirts, were attending a policeman's ball. To expose their rented evening clothes to ruin or to let the building burn down; such was the hard choice confronting them. They decided to oppose the fire. While water pumps throbbed, dancing pumps climbed the fire ladders, flapping tails defied the licking flames. . . . In the East, a young authoress, working on her first novel which concerned shoplifters, found it necessary to acquire local color for her story. Numbering no shoplifters among her immediate acquaintance, she decided to lift some merchandise herself. Unfortunately, a department-store detective and later a judge interfered with her literary work. . . . Not all the week's events emphasized quick thinking. One, at least, exemplified, a slower mental tempo. . . . In 1925 a Louisiana man borrowed a fountain pen. It was early in 1940 before he reached the decision to return the pen. . . . A covert assault on the American standard of living created alarm. In a Michigan town relief clients were restricted to one dog per family. . . . Lack of knowledge caused errors. In Atlanta, two robbers stole a suit of clothes from an apartment. When they brought the suit to a pawnbroker, they did not know he was the owner of the apartment and the suit. . . .

Delicate situations, not altogether devoid of embarrassment, took form. . . . The morning after he had delivered a speech demanding greater traffic safety for school-children, a New Jersey Borough Councilman, driving his car, knocked over eight school children waiting for a school bus. . . . A Missouri weatherman, who had just warned the public to get ready for zero temperatures, forgot to take his car in off the street. The car froze up during the night. . . . In New York, a seventy-five-year-old man, ten years in this country, who had never mailed a letter here before, tried to deposit one in a fire-alarm box. . . . At an up-State New York Woman's Club meeting, a supposed reporter first took notes of the meeting, later took some of the ladies' mink coats. . . . Cats were not forgotten. The will of a Staten Island school teacher established a memorial: "In memory of my pet cat, Malta." . . . The sturdy build of the modern automobile, its power to preserve human life, were graphically shown in Pittsburgh. A window-cleaner fell from the fifth story of a building, landed on the top of an auto. He did not break a single bone, the top of the auto was only slightly dented. . . .

A rather unusual type of church-goer was detected in Cleveland. He spent a great part of his time stealing from Protestant churches. Asked why he robbed only Protestant churches, he replied: "I went into a Catholic church once and saw a statue of God staring at me. My hands turned icy cold, so I ran out and never went in another Catholic church again." . . . While ordinarily the Catholic Church does not wish to divert people to the Protestant churches, it may be that this particular class of church-goers constitutes an exception to the general rule.

THE PARADER